

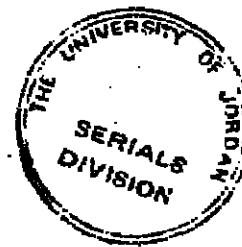
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Price: Jordan 100 fils; Syria 1 pound; Lebanon 1 pound; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams; Great Britain 25 pence

Kuwait appeals to Turkey

ANKARA (AP) — Kuwait has appealed to Turkey on behalf of Iraq, asking for a solution to the Baghdad water problem straining relations between Turkey and Iraq. The appeal was made by a Kuwaiti minister, who said that the Baghdad water problem is a serious one and that it has been caused by Iraq. The minister said that Iraq has diverted the main flow of the Euphrates river on Jan. 13 to raise the level in the reservoir of the giant Al-Basra Dam and to build some construction work out of the diversion channel. The water problem will last until Feb. 13. The diversion means reduced flow for Syria and Iraq downstream. Iraq and Syria have protested Turkey's action, expressing fear that their territories will be damaged and their electricity output hurt. Iraq has specifically asked that Turkey reduce the cut-off period from four to two weeks.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»



See you there... 7th Circle

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Soviet team begins talks today

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Soviet delegation headed by the deputy minister of foreign economic relations, V.F. Molodtsov, has arrived in Amman and is expected to begin talks Thursday with senior officials, including Finance Minister Basel Jaradat, on rescheduling Jordan's debt repayments to the Soviet Union. Reached over the phone by the Jordan Times Wednesday, Molodtsov declined from making any comments until the delegation completes its discussions here. The team will be here until Monday.

U.S. reaffirms Mideast stand

WASHINGTON (UPI) — A State Department spokeswoman Tuesday reiterated U.S. support for the current efforts to further the Middle East peace process. Questioned about reports that new Czechoslovak President Václav Havel has offered to mediate the Arab-Israeli conflict — a move that has been welcomed by some Palestinians — Margaret Tutwiler replied, "I don't have a response other than to say we have a system that we're working very, very hard on with the secretary of state. If the new president of Czechoslovakia feels that he could be helpful... we have encouraged anyone who felt they could be constructive and helpful to the process to please do so." But, she added, "we believe we have a system right at this moment that we have been carefully nurturing and passing and working towards."

Namibia independence set for March 21

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Namibia's constituent assembly voted unanimously Wednesday to declare independence from South Africa at midnight March 21, the South African Press Association news agency reported. The vote by the 72-seat assembly, set to become the Namibian parliament after independence, was one of the territory's final preparations to end seven decades of South African rule.

Aden frees 32 political prisoners

SANAA (R) — South Yemeni President Haidar Abu Bakr Al Attas ordered Wednesday the release of 32 political prisoners, including supporters of ousted President Ali Nasser Mohamed. Radio Aden, monitored in Sanaa, said the order covered 22 prisoners detained since Mohamed was toppled in bloody fighting in 1986 while the other 10 were arrested in 1989.

Bush calls Gorbachev on arms control

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. President George Bush telephoned Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev Wednesday in preparation for next month's arms control talks. White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said, "He did speak with Gorbachev." Fitzwater said, "I don't have much detail on it, although it did involve arms control." The spokeswoman said there was "no direct discussion" between the two presidents of a U.S. Cable News Network (CNN) report Tuesday that Gorbachev was considering resigning from his post as head of the Communist Party (see page 8).

Iraq draft constitution ready

BAGHDAD (R) — President Saddam Hussein said Wednesday the draft of a new Iraqi constitution has been completed and will soon be put to the people in a referendum. Iraq's leaders had decided to extend freedom and expand decision-making "because the expansion of such responsibility is a source of power for the society and the government," he told a meeting of the constitutional committee of the Arab Cooperation Council.

Militias shatter Algerian truce

SIDON, Lebanon (R) — Fending Shiite Muslim militia fought with artillery and rockets in South Lebanon Wednesday, shattering a four-day-old Algerian-mediated truce.

Family of eight killed in collision on highway

AMMAN (J.T.) — Eight members of a family were killed Wednesday in a collision between a private car carrying a Saudi Arabian pilot and a Jordanian truck on the Amman-Aqaba highway, five kilometers south of Qadimah. A Civil Defense Department spokesman said the accident occurred when the car, which was packed on the side, moved into the road. The driver, identified as Thawrya Juma'a Yaseen, lost control of the car and crashed in the opposite direction at the same time when the truck, driven by Hassan Ali Thilabati, was overtaking a number of cars in front, according to the spokesman.

The truck rammed the car, crushing it completely and killing all the passengers, he said. The killed were identified as Juma'a Yaseen Al Ramahi, 46, his wife Thawrya, 29, who was driving the car, and their six children — Yaseen, Hassan, Muhammad, Ahmad, Surryya and Hadil aged between four and 12 years. Civil Defense personnel, policemen and armed forces members participated in pulling the car from beneath the truck and retrieving the bodies from the wreckage. The bodies were transferred to Al Karak government Hospital and then to their relatives.

CBJ expects move on interest rates to increase savings, investments

By Salamah Ne'mat
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) said Wednesday its decision to allow commercial banks in the Kingdom to float interest rates on deposits and loans would increase savings and subsequently boost investments, but bankers said they were unsure whether the market would respond in accordance with CBJ expectations and projections.

Deputy CBJ Governor Michel Marito said the move was expected to bring about a "positive interest rate" that covers inflation and encourages people to save with interest on time deposits calculated independently by banks. "It is all a matter of supply and demand," Marito said. "The Jordanian market is very good in terms of boosting savings and subsequently investments," he said. He argued that "when you have more saving, you have more investment with a very small time lag. This is accepted everywhere." Marito said a higher interest rate would serve as an incentive for people to save in Jordanian dinar rather than in dollars or other currencies if the returns were higher, and achieve a better balance between aggregate demand and aggregate supply in the market.

He ruled out a negative impact of higher borrowing rates because "one or two per cent higher interest on loans will not discourage investment. It is all a question of availability of funds. When people have more funds they invest more."

Marito confirmed reports that the Central Bank's decision came in line with conditions set by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) but said: "We are fully convinced by this move, which we think is good for the economy."

Dr. Khalil Salem, chairman of the Arab Finance Corporation (Jordan), and a prominent economist, disagreed.

"The impact is not," he declared. "I don't think anybody will be affected (by the floatation) in the immediate future because there will be no change in the present situation."

Salem, a member of the Upper House of Parliament (Senate), explained that as banks start calculating slightly higher interest on deposits and loans, "the margin will remain the same and it will be only slightly better for depositors and slightly worse for borrowers."

Salem told the Jordan Times that the Central Bank was "mainly complying with IMF conditions." He said he had advised the Central Bank against the

Floating of interest rates on dinar — a positive step

By Dr. Fehed Faneek

BY VIRTUE of the recent amendment to the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Law, the bank has decided to float interest rates on the Jordanian dinar as of Saturday, Feb. 3, 1990. This means that the CBJ will not impose ceilings or floors for interest rates on deposits and credit facilities any more. The determination of interest rates will be left to the commercial banks subject to market forces.

This step will not mean the depositor will have to bargain with the bank manager for the best interest rate. Each bank will announce its rates as applicable to each and every one of them. The difference in the interest rate between one deposit and another will be determined by two factors: The size of the deposit and the duration of the deposit. It is only natural therefore to expect higher rates for bigger deposits and longer terms.

As far as credit facilities are concerned, the banks will announce their base rate which will be applicable to their prime customers such as the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company.

Extra percentage points will be added to reflect the risk evaluation of each borrower, and the variation could be as high as three percentage points.

Under the floating system, there is nothing to prevent variation of interest rates from one bank to another; the bank that is tight for liquidity may offer higher interest rates to depositors, and conversely, the bank that carries excessive liquidity may offer lower rates.

But this is not a crucial factor. A large bank with excessive liquidity may still offer the same high rate of interest in order to protect its share in the market and prevent the loss of some of its customers in favour of competitors.

In this respect, it is more likely that some banks will stand out as leaders. If, for example, the Arab Bank or the Housing Bank raised or lowered their own scale of interest rates, other banks might follow suit the next day or the day after.

Under floating, interest rates may rise or fall according to changing circumstances in the country and abroad. Interest rates on the Jordanian dinar will interact with the international markets. It is most likely

will improve the allocation of resources towards the best uses with higher return. In addition, it will help in combating capital flight although other factors are more important.

Higher interest rates also are an instrument in checking inflation and reducing consumption, especially of durable goods that are normally acquired by instalments.

We should not give too much thought to whether the liberalisation of interest rates is in line with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme or not. The important thing is that the step is useful for our national economy to secure flexibility and the ability to respond to changing circumstances.

Over the past years, and well before Jordan's recent economic crisis and the adoption of the economic correction programme we have repeatedly called for a floating system like that which was decided upon by the CBJ on Tuesday. It is a positive step therefore that the Central Bank was finally convinced that the floating is good for the national economy.

NEWS ANALYSIS

that interest rates will tend to rise gradually to match the expected rate of inflation which is around 13 per cent. The interest rate on the dinar under the current circumstances will range between 13 and 15 per cent.

Changing the rate of interest is effective in attracting depositors from one bank to another. But it is less effective on aggregate savings. People do not save more or less because interest rates are higher or lower. Other factors are more effective in determining domestic savings.

Industrial projects may be affected by higher interest rates but the impact is not crucial. The share of interest in the cost of the final products is on average no more than five per cent. The rise of interest rates by two percentage points will raise the cost of industrial products by one-tenth of one per cent.

King asks ministers, officials to visit people and seek solutions to problems

Badran urges Moscow to stop Jewish flow to Israel

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer with agency dispatches

AMMAN — Jordan has called on the Soviet Union to stop the emigration of Soviet Jews who could eventually end up in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, Prime Minister Mudar Badran said Wednesday.

The issue of Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel will also be discussed at an Arab summit called by Saudi Arabia, and Jordan was looking forward for Arab action on this "important and serious issue," Badran told reporters. Saudi Arabia has called for a summit to discuss the situation in Lebanon, and it is expected that Soviet Jewish emigration will also figure high on the agenda of the pan-Arab conference as and when it is held.

Speaking after a visit to the Prime Ministry by His Majesty King Hussein, Badran said: "Jordan and the Palestinian people will be the most affected (the mass influx of Soviet Jews to Israel) since the newcomers will be settled in the occupied territories at the expense of the Palestinian people."

"I view the situation as a new conspiracy against the Palestinian people and as aimed at the eviction of the Palestinians from their homeland," Badran added.

He said he had told the outgoing Soviet ambassador to Jordan, Alexander Zinchuk, who called on him on a courtesy visit, that while the Arab World "appreciates the Soviet Union's services and support for Arab causes, we also have to tell Moscow that Soviet Jewish immigra-

tion to Israel is bound to adversely affect the Palestinian people and their national rights," Badran said.

Zinchuk showed him a memorandum sent by Moscow to Israel asking the Jewish state not to settle Soviet Jews in the occupied territories, Badran said. "But this does not solve the problem," he added.

"We want the Soviet Union to stop the emigration until peace has been established in the region and the rights of the Palestinian people's rights are restored," Badran said.

During his visit to the Prime Ministry Wednesday, the King was briefed on the outcome of the two-day meetings of the Joint Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee which concluded Tuesday, Badran said.

The King asked ministers and government officials to make visits to the various parts of the Kingdom with a view to gaining firsthand information on problems of people and formulating solutions, the prime minister said.

"Shamir — a guerrilla" Badran, in remarks published in an Egyptian magazine Wednesday, criticised Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir for refusing to deal with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), saying Shamir was also a guerrilla once.

"Now he says he is a prime minister and a politician. I also say that (PLO Chairman Yasser) Arafat is a politician," Badran told the Egyptian weekly magazine Al-Mussawir.

Palestinians stage strike in support of PLO

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinians staged a general strike throughout the occupied territories Wednesday in solidarity with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) which Israel wants to exclude from any peace talks.

At Rafah refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip unknown assailants stabbed to death Atweh Abdul Aziz Al Masri, 35, a taxi driver suspected as an informant for Israel, sources said Wednesday.

Stores were shuttered and streets deserted throughout the West Bank and Gaza in a demonstration of support for the PLO by the 1.75 million Palestinians.

The leadership of the 25-month-old Palestinian uprising said in its latest leaflet: "Support the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of our people and stress the right of the PLO to choose and announce the Palestinian delegation."

Israel wants to exclude the PLO from all Arab-Israeli peace talks.

The leading Muslim body in the occupied territories assailed Israel Wednesday for settling Soviet Jewish immigrants.

"We suffered from these foreigners in the past," the Higher Islamic Council in Jerusalem said in a statement read in the courtyard of Al Aqsa Mosque.

"The land by the law of God and man cannot be seized from its owners to build houses for people who came from Russia and Europe," it said.

Israel expects that 50,000 to 100,000 Soviet Jews will arrive this year and up to 750,000 over the next five to six years.

The influx, prompted by Soviet emigration reforms and U.S. immigration limits, will change the population balance in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip where 70,000 Jews now live among 1.75 million Palestinians.

Israeli Finance Minister Shimon Peres said Tuesday that in view of the flow of Soviet Jews to Israel he thought Washington should lift a 16-year-old ban denying most-favoured-nation trade status to the Soviet Union.

"I think we are seeing an entirely new Soviet Union and I think the change is irreversible," Peres, the Labour Party leader, said when questioned by reporters about the U.S. ban.

"As far as we're concerned one should recognise that (Soviet leader Mikhail) Gorbachev did change the Soviet Union policy and in reference to the Jewish people in particular."

A foreign ministry spokesman, asked about Peres's remarks, said Israel would not get involved officially in what was an internal U.S. matter.

Aoun-Geagea war engulfs E. Beirut

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Savage fighting between Christians engulfed east Beirut Wednesday, devastating the city in tank and artillery battles that ignited huge fires.

The civil war, which erupted in mid-morning, intensified as night fell and both sides brought in reinforcements in a pitiless struggle between General Michel Aoun and Samir Geagea's Lebanese Forces (LF) militia.

Flames lit the night sky and a huge grey cloud hung over the Christian enclave as the heavily-armed 25,000 combatants fought from street-to-street in Lebanon's worst ever inter-Christian strife.

The enclave is home to about half a million people.

Scores of fires raged out of control, one of them threatening Lebanon's main fuel storage depot at Dora.

"The whole area is on fire," said a photographer.

With a power blackout throughout the enclave, a red glow silhouetted battle positions set up on rooftops by the 10,000-strong LF, which defied Aoun's order to disarm and disband.

Both Aoun and Geagea vowed to continue the battle till victory. "We are sorry for what is happening but there is no way back," Aoun told supporters at his head-

quarters in the suburb of Baabda. Aoun said the LF's weapons were not intended to defend the nation but to "show off in the streets, levy taxes, threaten people and attack them."

Geagea said in an interview with Voice of Lebanon radio that his forces were in full control of their positions and were beating back Aoun's troops.

"We are in a state of self-defence... we will confront every aggression with a greater aggression... we hope that this would be a final lesson to anyone who wants to attack the resistance," Geagea said.

PLO suggests transit camps for Soviet emigrants in Europe

TUNIS (R) — Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat had talks with Soviet envoy Gennady Tarasov in Tunis Wednesday and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) said it wanted Moscow to reintroduce transit camps in Europe for Jewish emigrants.

Tarasov, who is Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze's assistant for Middle East affairs, arrived in Tunis amid Arab and Palestinian alarm at the prospect of a massive exodus of Soviet Jews to Israel.

Israel expects 50,000 to 100,000 Soviet Jews to arrive this year and up to 750,000 over the next five to six years.

The PLO leadership, which includes the 15-man Executive Committee and the leaders of the constituent groups, met on the problem of Soviet Jewish emigration Tuesday night and were met again later Wednesday.

Many say Washington has compounded the Soviet emigration problem by restricting its intake to 50,000 a year.

The main transit camps in the past have been in Austria and most of the Jews who passed through chose to go to the United States.

State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said Tuesday President George Bush's government had repeatedly discussed its concerns on this issue with the Israeli government, particularly with regard to divided families.

"As we currently understand their policies, the Israelis impose difficult tests of residence."

"We hope that the government of Israel would apply residence requirements with sensitivity and flexibility," she added.

Tutwiler did not define the residency requirements but critics accuse Israel of a system of bureaucratic procedures by which a person's right to reside in the territories is either withheld or withdrawn.

The expulsions frequently leave families divided, with men remaining in the West Bank while their wives are exiled to Jordan. This is seen as a systematic

attempt to expel Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Israeli human rights activists had also assailed the expulsions. Leftist Israeli member of parliament Dedi Zucker, who initiated a campaign to stop the expulsion of Palestinians, welcomed Rabin's decision as "a big achievement."

But he said expulsions must stop altogether and Israel must draw up criteria for allowing Palestinian families to stay together.

Zucker, a human rights activist, said he wrote Rabin several weeks ago that it was hypocritical for Israel to demand the migration of Jews from the Soviet Union and Ethiopia to be united with their families while separating Palestinians.

He told parliament of 58 Palestinians he said faced expulsion and demanded that Rabin answer each case individually.

Army keeps civilians in besieged Sudanese town

KHARTOUM (R) — For a lucky few in the besieged, refugee-jammed Sudanese city of Juba, \$350 can buy space on a packed cargo plane to Khartoum. For the others there is no escape.

Refugees told Reuters Wednesday the army was preventing thousands of frightened civilians from fleeing to rebel-held territory outside the town to escape shelling, food shortages and the threat of rebel attack.

The Sudan Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA), which surrounds Juba, has urged civilians to leave before it launches a full-scale attack on the army garrison. The city holds 300,000 people, two-thirds refugees from other areas. Few can afford to leave through Juba airport, the only permitted outlet, civilians who have taken the 1,200 kilometre flight north to Khartoum told Reuters.

One who arrived Tuesday said he paid 1,600 Sudanese pounds (\$355) to fly aboard a cargo plane packed with 500 people, mainly women and children.

Local officials have appealed to Juba's people to remain calm, while government officials in Khartoum dismissed the SPLA threat to the city as propaganda. Foreign relief officials said authorities in Juba were preventing civilians leaving in the hope that their presence would deter the SPLA from launching an all-out attack.

Refugees reported short food supplies in the city.

The United Nations sent two planes to Juba Monday to evacuate relief workers and their dependents taking advantage of a 12-hour ceasefire offered by SPLA.

Casualties from rebel shelling of Juba are estimated at 20 to 25 by refugees and relief workers, 10 by the government. Refugees say 60 shells and rockets hit the town in the past 10 days, most hitting civilian areas.

Brigadier Dominic Kassiano, a member of Sudan's ruling milit-

"The people are terrified by the bombardment," he said.

The doctor described a population living in fear of mob violence if food stocks ran out. Residents also believe street fighting between rebels and government troops is inevitable, he said.

Juba is the largest town in southern Sudan, with the country's largest garrison of between 30,000 and 35,000. The government forces consist of armed civilians, police, and the army.

Juba residents' fear is increased by radio broadcasts by the SPLA which "everyone interprets... to mean there are rebels in the town ready to fight any time," the doctor said.

Like all foreigners fleeing Juba, the Italian doctor spoke on condition of anonymity, primarily to protect colleagues still in the city.

Foreigners began trickling from Juba a week ago when the rebels closed in on the town. But the exodus is uncoordinated and it is impossible to verify the number still remaining.

Estimates of the number of relief workers, missionaries and other foreigners once based in the provincial capital range from 80 to 120.

An Irish doctor said the latest food distribution last week amounted to an average of 100 grams of beans and corn for each person daily for two weeks, which she described "starvation ration."

A month ago, she said, the residents received 800 grams of each maize and beans per day.

For the fortunate few with money, and for members of the security forces, however, there is food.

"I could buy almost anything at the market, except sugar. For that you had to go to the army, indirectly of course," said the Italian.

Planeloads of food, including vegetables and frozen chicken, are routinely flown from Khartoum. The food is mainly for the army, but can also be bought for



high prices.

There is some government-subsidised food, mainly maize, whose flour is mixed with wheat to make bread. But most residents have no money, and starvation is described as rampant.

The Irish doctor said she worked in a programme feeding 17,000 children under the age of five and 5,000 adults suffering from several malnutrition.

When she left Sunday, there was enough powdered milk and high-protein biscuits to last another month. But she was pessimistic about prospects for additional supplies getting through.

"Just before December we ordered twelve tons of milk and another twelve tons of biscuits," she said. "They are still in Khartoum because of lack of transport."

Foreigners and wealthy Sudanese began seriously considering fleeing when rebels shelled not only Juba, but also the nearest garrison in Yei, 120 kilometres southwest.

Bob Koepf, who is in charge of the Lutheran World Federation activities in southern Sudan, said the few 22 foreigners to Nairobi last week.

On Monday, another 14 flew to Nairobi on the Lufthansa Boeing 707 leased from Sudan Airways to ferry 30 tons of food daily to Juba — the only donor food reaching the city.

Another Italian doctor said Juba residents are being prevented from leaving or returning to their villages to avoid the shelling.

The International Committee of the Red Cross is negotiating with the government and the rebels for the creation of a neutral zone to which civilians from Juba can be evacuated and provided with relief food and medical services, said Dominique Buff, whose Nairobi office is responsible for Red Cross activities in rebel control areas.

Heykal predicts Arab-Israeli war

CAIRO (R) — Prominent Egyptian journalist Mohammad Heykal said Tuesday he was certain there would be another Arab-Israeli war.

"A war between the Arabs and Israel is coming — no doubt about that," he told delegates at the Cairo Book Fair Tuesday evening.

Heykal avoids the limelight in Egypt these days but in the era of the late President Gamal Abdul Nasser his weekly columns were the most influential voice in Arab journalism.

Egypt, the only Arab state to have made peace with Israel, has been trying to bring Palestinians

and Israelis together for their first-ever dialogue — so far without any success.

"I am surprised we are talking about peace formulas while unaware of the price Israel is asking for that peace," he said.

That price, he said, would include expulsion of Arabs as well as massive Arab economic aid.

"I am ready to say that Israel will demand (as part of the price for peace) water from the Nile and may also demand oil from Saudi Arabia and Algeria."

He said the outcome of a settlement with Israel would be major changes in Israel's borders and a confederation between Palesti-

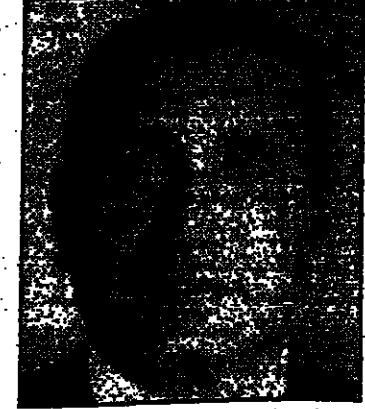
nians and Jordan.

"This would be an incomplete peace," he said.

Heykal fell out with Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, over his agreement to disengage forces in Sinai after 1973's October War — a prelude to Egypt's 1979 peace treaty with Israel.

Heykal also criticised Arab governments for their lacklustre support of the Palestinian uprising in the Israeli-occupied territories, calling the rebellion a lost opportunity.

All are trying to besiege the intifada, maybe because they (Arab rulers) are scared of similar intifadas against their own



Mohammad Heykal regimes," he said, adding that the Arabs had offered only 20 million dollars to help the revolt.

Kuwait seeks formula to broaden democracy

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's emir is holding talks on ways to broaden democracy in the country after stormy, unprecedented rallies demanding a return of the dissolved parliament.

Officials said Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah and his crown prince have been holding talks with leading citizens to seek a formula for popular participation in government.

The rallies were attended by thousands of people and the last one, declared illegal by the government, was broken up by police using stun grenades and tear gas.

Organisers suspended the meetings last week after the emir offered to discuss the pro-democracy demands and, in a television address on Jan. 20, called for dialogue in efforts to restore democracy.

The officials said the two leaders have been holding daily meetings over the past week with former deputies and tribal leaders. But they have yet to talk to any of the 32 pro-parliament deputies involved in the rallies.

Western diplomats say the emir's talks are apparently to build up a firm consensus with pro-government and traditional supporters before addressing the country on National Day, Feb. 25.

Ministers have ruled out a revival of the 50-member assembly although there has been evidence that press censorship has recently been eased.

Kuwait's lively parliament was dissolved in 1986 as the war between nearby Iran and Iraq spilled over into the wealthy northern Gulf state.

Many Kuwaitis oppose restoring the assembly, saying its public debates sowed divisions among the country's different tribes, ethnic groups and religious factions, and that deputies abused their positions for personal gain.

An estimated 6,000 people attended the last pro-parliament rally — a huge turnout in a small country where the number of eligible voters at the last election in 1985 was less than 60,000.

Government officials say, however, that many of those attending were onlookers or ineligible to vote.

Western diplomats have said they did not see a threat to the country's security from the pro-democracy movement. And Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, who is also the country's prime minister, has warned that the government would not tolerate any threats to security.

Shamir's statement on reunification angers Kohl

BONN (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has infuriated Chancellor Helmut Kohl and triggered an exchange of letters by insisting that a reunified Germany will endanger Jews, a Munich newspaper reported Wednesday.

The Sueddeutsche Zeitung said Shamir had ignored Kohl's protests and refused to take back his repeated declarations that a united Germany would be a "deadly danger to Jews."

Shamir said in his letter that as prime minister, he reserved the right to "express our doubts and our fears," the newspaper said.

If the millions of Jewish victims had survived the Holocaust, "our people would be in a different situation," he told Kohl.

The newspaper said Shamir's words angered Kohl, who regarded them as a burden on Israeli-West German ties.

In his reply, Kohl, wrote that the memory of the Nazi genocide was part of the German identity. But he had to protest against the comparison between present-day West Germany and the Germany of Nazi times, the paper said.

Another, democratic Germany existed today, Kohl said. And like other peoples, self-determination could not be withheld from the Germans.

The newspaper said Shamir responded that, although the demolition of the Berlin Wall and the spread of democracy was welcome, nobody could say for certain "what the end result of the present wave of enthusiasm and emotion will be, least of all the Jewish people."

The new programme, approved by the party's central council and under discussion at lower levels, describes the party as open to all Palestinians, not just members of the working classes, Najab said.

The new look party will draw inspiration from "the national traditions and the heritage of struggle of the Palestinian people" as well as the classic theories of Marxism, he added.

Minority groups within the party will be able to express themselves without fear of disciplinary measures and members need agree only with the broad thrust

MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEFS

Bahrain, Bhutan to establish ties

BAHRAIN (R) — Bahrain and Bhutan have decided to establish diplomatic relations to boost cooperation between the two countries, the official Gulf News Agency said Wednesday. The agency quoted Bhutan's King Jigme Singye Wangchuck as saying at the end of a two-day visit that the two countries had "decided to lay the foundation of an enduring friendship." King Jigme, who left for New Delhi, had talks with Bahrain's Emir, Sheikh Isa bin Sulman Al Khalifa, and other top officials on regional and international issues.

Iran to mark revolution anniversary

NICOSIA (R) — Iranians celebrate the 11th anniversary of their February revolution as their Islamic leaders proclaim economic development the nation's overriding goal in a decade of reconstruction. The "10-day dawn" celebrations begin Thursday with a mass gathering at the shrine of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who flew back to Iran on Feb. 1, 1979 after 15 years in exile to lead the final assault on the late Shah's pro-Western monarchy. Khomeini's successor, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Monday described the Islamic Revolution as a "divine miracle" and urged people to take part in the celebrations. The government has declared Thursday a holiday to ensure a large crowd at the anniversary gathering, the first to be held since Khomeini's death on June 3 following cancer surgery. President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani will be the main speaker at the shrine near the Behesht-e Zahra Cemetery in the southern outskirts of Tehran.

Turkish coal mine blast kills 4

ANKARA (R) — Four Turkish miners were killed Wednesday in an underground blast at a coal mine near the Black Sea town of Amasra, coal officials said. Four other miners were injured by the blast which triggered a cave-in about 30 metres below the surface. The mine is in the Zonguldak region, which produces about four million tonnes of bituminous coal annually. Officials said the injured men were in hospital and the bodies of the dead had been recovered. Eight miners in the same region were killed in two similar incidents in December 1988.

Palestinian Communists dilute Marxist element

TUNIS (R) — The Palestinian Communist Party (PCP) said Wednesday it had watered down its Marxist stance, relaxed conditions for membership and abandoned discipline for ideological deviation.

Secretary-General Suleiman Najab told a news conference the changes were a response to both internal factors and changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials outside the party said a major incentive for reform was the intifada in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which has encouraged popular participation in politics.

The new programme, approved by the party's central council and under discussion at lower levels, describes the party as open to all Palestinians, not just members of the working classes, Najab said.

The new look party will draw inspiration from "the national traditions and the heritage of struggle of the Palestinian people" as well as the classic theories of Marxism, he added.

Minority groups within the party will be able to express themselves without fear of disciplinary measures and members need agree only with the broad thrust

Under new party rules, one third of the members of the politburo will have to vacate their seats every five years and the secretary general may not serve more than 10 years.

The party's old programme was last amended in 1983.

Under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein and on the Occasion of the 12th Meeting of the Executive Board of the Arab Academy of Music and the 1st Arab Music Rostrum. The National Music Conservatory/Noor Al Hussein Foundation organises the following concerts:

Date	Concert	Place
Saturday 3/2/1990	THE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA of the Jordanian Armed Forces	Royal Cultural Centre
Sunday 4/2/1990	FUHEIS GROUP for Revival of Heritage	Philadelphia Hotel
Monday 5/2/1990	French Oud Player MARK LOOPUYT (in cooperation with the French Cultural Centre)	Philadelphia Hotel
Tuesday 6/2/1990	THE ARAB NAGHAM ORCHESTRA (in cooperation with the Association of Jordanian Musicians)	Philadelphia Hotel
Wednesday 7/2/1990	Pianist and composer PATRICK LAMA	Philadelphia Hotel
Thursday 8/2/1990	Renowned Iraqi Oud Player MUNIR BASHIR	Philadelphia Hotel

All concerts will start at 8:00 p.m. Tickets for each concert are for JD 3 a piece. A combination ticket for all six concerts is available at JD 14.500.

Tickets available at: The Royal Cultural Centre, Tel. 669026
The French Cultural Centre, Tel. 637009
Philadelphia Hotel, Tel. 663100
The National Music Conservatory, Tel. 687620

THE FRENCH CULTURAL CENTRE PRESENTS

DES CLOWNS

On THURSDAY, February the 1st, 8 P.M. at the ROYAL CULTURAL CENTRE

Tickets available at: THE FRENCH CULTURAL CENTRE THE ROYAL CULTURAL CENTRE

TICKETS PRICES: 3 JD.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Koran
15:40 Programme review
15:45 Children programme
15:50 Book of Adventure
16:00 News for the Deaf
16:10 Religious programme
16:20 Health programme
16:30 Programme review
16:40 News in Arabic
16:50 Local series
17:00 Programme review
17:10 Local programme
17:20 Arabic film
17:30 News in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

18:30 Tel Fere Tel Film
18:40 La Chaine sun channels
18:50 News in French
19:00 Documentary
19:10 News in Hebrew
19:20 Local series
19:30 News in Arabic
19:40 A Different World
19:50 NBA Basketball
20:00 News in English
20:10 Feature film

PRAYER TIMES

05:46 Fajr
06:26 (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:49 Dhuhr
14:07 Asr
17:13 Maghrib
18:32 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 713331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assiuta International Church Tel. 827981, 683326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811255
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 654932

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A depression accompanied by a cold front will affect the Kingdom making it partly cloudy to cloudy and rainy at times. Winds will be southerly moderate to fresh. In Amman, winds will be southerly fresh and sea rough.

Amman Min./Max. temp. 3/11
Aqaba 10/15
Dera 2/13
Jordan Valley 8/16

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 14, Aqaba 22. Humidity readings: Amman 35 per cent, Aqaba 22 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN: Dr. Khalil Abdul Odeh 793392
Dr. Jamil Tarif 794710
Dr. Nabil Al Motaseb 626222
Dr. Adnan Al Disi 626660
Ficus pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Assana pharmacy 637053
Nairoch pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsad pharmacy 637660

IRBID: Dr. Ziad Al Bakri (—)
Al Shamra pharmacy (985238)

ZARQA: Dr. Hassan Hussein (—)
Khalil pharmacy 984917

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 690341
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 822228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 898390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 690800

HOSPITALS

AMMAN: Basma Medical Centre 813613/32
Custodi Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Alkhal Maternity, J. Amn. 624416/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 626262
Mahana, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsad 664171/4
Shamsad Hospital 662131
University Hospital 845945
Al-Munawwar Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/51
Al-Ami, Abdali 664164/6
Jalal, Al-Munawwar 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Amman 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/25
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
Ras Shua Hospital (09)986732

IRBID: Princess Basma Hospital (02)775555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)772775
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital (02)747100

AQABA: Princess Haya Hospital (03)514111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:15 Doha (RJ)
08:45 Doha (RJ)
09:20 New Delhi (RJ)
09:30 London (RJ)
10:00 Kuwait (RJ)
10:30 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
10:40 Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
11:15 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (RJ)
11:45 Montreal, New York (RJ)
12:00 Kuwait (add.) (RJ)
12:30 Laraca (RJ)

17:00 Baghdad (RJ)
18:00 London, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:10 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
18:30 Bangkok (RJ)
19:45 Rome (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:10 Santa (LF)
10:00 Kuwait (add.) (KU)
10:30 Baghdad (RJ)
10:40 Riyadh (SA)
10:50 Bahrain, Moscow (GF)
11:00 Kuwait (KU)
11:30 Ankara, Istanbul (TK)
12:00 Damascus, Dubai (EK)
12:15 Amsterdam (KL)
14:05 Muscat, Bahrain (GF)
14:30 Dhahran (TK)
15:30 Dubai (EK)
15:40 London (KL)
19:25 Frankfurt (LF)
20:10 Zurich, Laraca (SR)
21:05 Cairo (MS)
06:25 London (BA)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:00 Aqaba (RJ)
09:15 Aqaba (RJ)
10:45 Rome (RJ)
11:00 Kuwait (add.) (RJ)
12:00 London (RJ)
12:15 Paris (RJ)
12:30 Laraca (RJ)
13:00 Baghdad (RJ)
13:30 Riyadh (SA)
14:00 Cairo (RJ)
14:30 Dubai, Moscow (GF)
15:15 Bangkok (RJ)
15:15 Tel Aviv (RJ)
21:30 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:30 Kuwait, Abu Dhabi (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

10:10 Frankfurt (LF)
11:00 Kuwait (add.) (KU)
11:30 Baghdad (RJ)
11:40 Riyadh (SA)
11:50 Bahrain, Moscow (GF)
12:00 Kuwait (KU)
12:30 Ankara, Istanbul (TK)
12:40 Damascus, Dubai (EK)
12:55 Amsterdam (KL)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fill per kg.

Apple 420 / 380
Banana 430 / 400
Banana (Mekong) 400 / 350
Beans 750 / 650
Cabbage 90 / 60
Carrot 220 / 180
Cauliflower 150 / 100
Cucumbers (large) 300 / 250
Cucumbers (small) 300 / 400
Dates 550 / 500
Eggplant 240 / 200
Garlic 750 / 700
Gazelle 220 / 160
Grapefruit 220 / 180
Lemon 220 / 180
Macaroni (large) 420 / 350
Macaroni (small) 280 / 240
Onion (dry) 220 / 180
Onion (green) 220 / 180
Orange 220 / 180
Orange (Shamsad) 340 / 280
Pepper (hot) 700 / 700
Pepper (sweet) 800 / 700
Potato 250 / 180
Radish 120 / 100
Sage 220 / 180
Spinach 180 / 140
Tomatoes 150 / 100

FOR FRIDAY

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE

18:30 Koran
18:40 Children programme
18:50 Religious programme
19:00 Friday's prayer
19:10 Sports programme
19:20 Religious seminar
19:30 Feature film
19:40 Message from Oum
19:50 Local programme
20:00 Programme review
20:10 News in Arabic
20:20 Local programme
20:30 Arabic series
20:40 News in Hebrew
20:50 News in Arabic
21:00 First Among Equals
21:10 Programme cont.

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Des Chiffres Et de Lettres
17:40 French film
17:50 News in French
18:00 Documentary
18:10 News in Hebrew
18:20 News in Arabic
18:30 Coach
18:40 Thirty Something
18:50 News in English
19:00 First Among Equals
19:10 Programme cont.

PRAYER TIMES

05:46 Fajr
06:26 (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:49 Dhuhr
14:07 Asr
17:13 Maghrib
18:32 Isha

EC experts brief deputies on budget

AMMAN (Petra) — Two European Community (EC) experts in planning national budgets Wednesday briefed Lower House of Parliament members on budget strategies adopted in European countries.

At the meeting, which was attended by the chairman of the House's financial committee, Dr. Abdullah Enawar, and First Deputy House Speaker Jamal Sarairoh, discussions covered procedures in organising budgets and controlling spending within the EC member states.

Enawar and the committee earlier enlisted the assistance of several Jordanian economists while the committee was debating the 1990 budget for Jordan.

Sarairoh voiced Jordan's appreciation to the EC for opening the door to European markets for agricultural products from the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip and for the EC's humanitarian assistance to various Palestinian organisations in the occupied lands.

Various aspects of Euro-Arab cooperation were also discussed.

In a separate meeting between Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi and Canadian Ambassador to Jordan Michael Bell, the question of emigration of Soviet Jews to the occupied lands was reviewed.

Lawzi voiced Jordan's concern over the emigration of Jews, which, he said, has serious consequences on prospects for peace in the region. Lawzi also briefed the ambassador on parliamentary life in the Kingdom.

Arar urges united ACC efforts

BAGHDAD (Petra) — Lower House Speaker Sulaiman Arar Wednesday urged parliamentarians of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) countries to join efforts in a manner that would serve the cause of Arab unity.

The way is now open for the parliamentarians of Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and North Yemen to work together to achieve the goals of the ACC, which was created in February last year as a step leading to pan-Arab unity, Arar said in an address to the opening session of an ACC parliamentary committee meeting here.

Islamic Congress warns of danger of Jewish emigration

AMMAN (Petra) — The expected emigration of Soviet Jews to occupied Palestine directly or indirectly constitutes a flagrant aggression on the Palestinian people and their rights and has very serious implications militarily, socially, economically and demographically for the Middle East, according to a statement issued here Wednesday by the Islamic Congress on Jerusalem.

"The emigration of a large number of Jews from the Soviet Union and other East European countries to the occupied lands is a result of improved relations between Washington and Moscow and therefore it is incumbent on the two superpowers to reconsider their policies which have been exploited by world Zionism at the expense of the Arab Nation and peace and security in the region," the statement said.

The congress warned that if Soviet emigration to occupied Palestine continues at the present rate, Israel will be paving the way for setting up "greater Israel" as proposed by its leaders.

The statement was issued at the end of the congress's general assembly meeting attended by prominent scholars and intellectuals to review the dangers inherent in the emigration of Jews to occupied Palestine. The statement said the congress reviewed the Jewish Agency's programmes to bring about the emigration of Jews from Eastern Europe, taking advantage of the present East-West détente and by linking this emigration to the issue of human rights.

The statement urged the Soviet Union to remain committed to its policy of supporting the Palestinian people's rights in their homeland and said that the emigration of Jews "is bound to adversely affect the Palestinians and consolidate Israel's usurpation of Arab territory." This emigration, the statement added, "is bound to encourage Israel to expand and to build more settlements in Arab land and help the Jewish state to establish 'greater Israel'."

The congress appealed to the U.N. Secretary-General to help stop "such aggressive moves" and urged the secretary general of the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) and the Arab League to call for urgent meetings to discuss the situation. The congress also decided to form a delegation to go to Moscow to convey the Arab and Islamic views on the issue.

According to the statement, the congress reviewed a report presented by the congress' Amman office, which said that actual emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel had never stopped because of the efforts of the Jewish Agency. The statement said 2,069 Soviet Jews went to Israel in 1987, 2,173 in 1988 and 11,170 in 1989.

Ministry closes polluted wells in Zarqa Basin

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Water and Irrigation has ordered the closure of artisan water wells in the Zarqa River Basin due to the high level of chemical pollutants found in the water as a result of industrial plants dumping their waste in the river.

The decision was taken following a wide-scale survey conducted on the river water and water from the various factories and plants along its banks which "not only pollute the river water but also the subterranean and other surface water in the region," according to a ministry statement issued Wednesday.

The statement said samples of Zarqa River water taken at different dates were tested at the ministry's laboratories and were found to contain cadmium, chrome and nickel among other minerals, making the water unsafe not only for drinking purposes but also for irrigation and fish breeding.

The water flows to the King Talal Dam reservoir, which normally provides water for irrigation in the dry season. The water has been used to produce nearly 400 tonnes of fish annually.

"Fish breeding will now have to stop since the fish will not be fit for human consumption," the statement said. "The closure of several water springs and other measures being taken with regard to the factories along the river bank are deemed necessary to stop the aggravation of the situation," the statement added.

The ministry's secretary-general, Mutazz Al Bilbeisi, said tests had proved that the underground water contained a high-level of phosphorous, ammonia and nitrogen and other oxygen-consuming materials, making the water unfit for consumption.

Bilbeisi said that the ministry had adopted several measures, like periodic monitoring of water coming out from factories and testing underground water samples. At least 30 factories in the river basin are now under constant surveillance to see if they are adhering to the specifications and standards set by the concerned Jordanian authorities, Bilbeisi added.

The ministry has found that several factories are constantly violating these regulations and some of their wastewater treatment plants are not functioning. Bilbeisi named 14 factories and industrial plants, which, he said, produced most of the pollutants that flowed down the river.

Last February two Swedish experts in environment protection visited Jordan and reported that the Zarqa region was heavily polluted as a result of pollutants from industries and municipal wastewater treatment plants along the Zarqa River. After spending two weeks here, the two experts said that the Zarqa water was one of the worst they had seen in the world. Pollution in Zarqa region, they said, can have negative effects on human health, including lung diseases.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

SOVIET TEAM LEAVES: Salam Khayef, director of the Grosny oil research institute in the Soviet semi-autonomous Republic of Chechen-Ingush, left Amman Wednesday for home following a week-long visit. He discussed with officials at the Royal Scientific Society, the Natural Resources Authority, the University of Jordan and the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company cooperation in oil and energy affairs (Petra).

ZARQA TELEPHONES: New telephone lines will be given to those who applied for them in Zarqa Governorate, but the subscribers will have to get their telephone sets by themselves since they are not available at the Telecommunications Corporation, Zarqa Telecommunications Department Director Wadi Tu'ma said Wednesday (Petra).

JWA MEETING: The Jordan Writers Association's (JWA) general assembly will meet Friday to endorse the JWA's membership in the Pan-Arab Federation of Writers and to define the conditions for membership in the association. JWA Deputy President Salem Nahas said the number of the association's members was less than its counterparts in other countries and that the membership in the association face several problems. The JWA is trying to solve these problems as it adjusts its internal systems, he said (Petra).

TAHER INVITED TO EGYPT: Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Taher Al-Taher has received an invitation from his Egyptian counterpart, Maher Abatha, to visit Egypt to exchange views on cooperation between the two countries in power and electricity. The invitation was presented to Taher by Egyptian Ambassador to Jordan Muhab Maghreb (Petra).

OMAN-JORDAN EDUCATION LINKS: Cooperation in higher education between Oman and Jordan was discussed at a meeting Wednesday by University of Jordan President Mahmoud Al Samra and Oman's ambassador to Jordan. Conditions of Omani students in Jordanian universities were reviewed at the meeting.

Transport company opens talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — The general assembly of the joint Jordanian-Syrian Land Transport Company (JSLTC) opened a meeting here Wednesday under the chairmanship of Minister of Transport Ibrahim Ayyoub and his Syrian counterpart Youssef Ahmad to discuss an operational plan for 1990 and to endorse the company's final accounts for 1989.

The assembly last met in Amman in September 1989. It was announced then that the company's fleet of trucks carried 1.5 million tonnes of goods between Jordan and Syria and the rest of the world since 1986.

This week's meeting, which ends Thursday, is expected to give details about future plans for operations. The question of promoting land transport between Jordan and Syria acquired a good deal of attention at the joint Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee meeting held in Amman this week, according to Ayyoub.

The Syrian minister said that transport between the two neighbouring countries had become an essential element for development contributing towards full integration.

Work permits only for agriculture sector

AQABA (Petra) — The government will adopt all possible measures designed to end poverty and unemployment in the country and does not issue work permits for non-Jordanians except for work in agriculture, Minister of Social Development Abdul Majid Shriebeh announced Wednesday.

The minister said that the Ministry of Social Development aims to provide decent income for all families and financial assistance for low-income groups.

The minister toured charitable and voluntary societies in Aqaba and inspected their services. He said the social development department in Aqaba would conduct a survey to find out more about the needy groups.

Kingdom predicted to have 4 million people by 2000

Symposium reviews population plan

IRBID (J.T.) — A three-day symposium entitled "Communication, Population and Development" will begin at Yarmouk University March 4 under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to address the population situation in Jordan.

The Department of Statistics is currently preparing the ground for holding a general census during 1990. According to the department's director, Abdul Hadi Alawin, the census is expected to cost JD 1 million.

In a statement published by Al-Rai Arabic daily Wednesday, Alawin said that Jordan's population is expected to reach the four million mark by the end of this century. The present population is estimated at 3.1 million. Amman alone has a population of 935,000 which is expected to rise to 1.4 million by the year 2000, Alawin said. He said that 70 per cent of the population now lives in urban regions and that the population density is 35 persons for every square kilometre.

The symposium, which organised by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), will review working papers on population strategy in the Kingdom and ways of dealing with population issues, according to a Yarmouk University statement released Wednesday.

Indigenous factors need to formulate workable ideology

By Marwan M. Shalabi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — If the real issues that Jordan and its people face today are to be addressed in a workable and coherent manner, a new political, social and economic formula must come into existence, Deputy Husni Shiab told a group of 150 people attending a lecture about the democratic experiment in Jordan recently.

The Irbi deputy, who belongs to the 11-member Democratic Bloc in the Lower House of Parliament, called on pan-Arab nationalists and leftists to perform an "historic mission in which their ideologies would assimilate Jordan's cultural heritage and give it the positive role in addressing the country's needs."

Shiab said that in the past the leadership of political parties had failed to create a "functional mechanism" to practically carry out their political ideologies. "The inability of existing political parties to address the issues in a coherent and constructive manner has necessitated the formation of new, more functional political, economical and social formulas," Shiab told the Jordan Times in an interview after the lecture.

Parliamentary groupings, he said, did not reflect either existing or likely future political groupings and were thus not very "functional."

According to members of three of the four existing blocs in the Lower House, parliamentary groups are far from being finalised and polarised.

Discussions and meetings are taking place outside Parliament about the formation of new political parties and, according to Shiab, they will ultimately be reflected in groupings within Parliament.

"At this point we need less ideological discourse and more of a practical functional programme which derive from ideology. So really the question is how and not what," Shiab said.

Convincing people that Arab nationalism is a basic element of Arab political thought is no longer necessary because, according to Shiab, "it is so obvious." It is necessary, however, to apply the basic tenets of pan-Arab nationalism, Islamist and leftist thought in a coherent and realistic manner.

On the surface, the three lines of thought could be interpreted to contradict each other. However, they could also be interpreted to be complementary in an attempt to create a workable populist, social, economic and political formula which, through the "right mechanism" carried out by the "right people," could be the "third way" which has eluded Arab political life for so long, according to Shiab.

"While important social and cultural factors had not been taken into consideration by many of the political parties, whose platforms were based on nationalism and leftist ideologies in the last 30 years, this new formula must take these 'left out' factors into consideration," Shiab said.

"While the ideas and ideologies from which the existing political parties stem have not failed, their executors have failed to, functionally adapt them to Jordan's political, economic, cultural and social reality," Shiab said.

Opponents of leftist ideologies and nationalism have made generalisations by saying that as political trends "they failed." This assertion, Shiab contends, "is not true but they were not made workable."

Although one reason that nationalists and leftists were not able to carry out their ideologies was that they were forced to work underground, due to the banning of political parties in Jordan, Shiab contends that that alone is not an excuse. He points out that while Islamic movements were given the opportunity to air their views and aspirations in Jordan since the 1950s, the leftists and nationalists were not. "But the Islamists have not succeeded in presenting a realistic and workable formula to address the country's economic, political and social needs either, although they did have exposure which would have allowed them to do so," Shiab asserts.

Besides the long and enduring harassment that the leftists and nationalists were exposed to, their leaders often shunned Islamists and Islamic movements in such a manner that the latter were able to label them anti-Islamic and thus make them unacceptable to a large majority of the population.

"The secular movements in our society have traditionally adopted certain Western thoughts which appeared to contradict certain values in our society," Shiab said. "We should now focus on devising an ideology which embraces the common denominators in our society. Having left out the Islamic trends in the past, secular movements allowed the tra-

ditional Islamists to occupy the role of the defenders of the faith. Indeed it allowed Islamic traditionalists to label anything or anyone secular as 'atheistic', a concept which is not acceptable to the average Jordanian."

Lower House blocs

Shiab pointed out that until more defined groundrules appear, based on new or existing political party formulas, parliamentary blocs were unlikely to represent any definite political, economic, or social lines.

"We have to have a common ground on which to base our stands on the real issues," Shiab said. "In the Democratic bloc there are three members of three existing political parties as well as deputies who represent different shades of pan-Arabism. This seemed to be enough of a common ground at the beginning but the political and economic reality demands that formulae which address practical realities be uniform. When members of the same bloc are not able, for whatever reasons, to have a common stand on the most basic issues then the bloc loses its purpose. At present those affiliated with political parties within the different blocs have not been initiators, but followers, of party lines which exist outside Parliament and not within. This has diluted their effectiveness and the effectiveness of the blocs to which they belong," Shiab said.

Shiab added that a parliamentary bloc should have the paramount role of party working within Parliament in order to have common ground on basic issues. He said that the voting pattern of members of the Democratic bloc during the vote of confidence of the present government indicated that such a common stand did not exist.

"It is like a dish which has lots of nutritional ingredients and is not eaten and thus loses its benefits," he said. Ensuring the success of the democratic experiment could only come about through its utilisation and not by "freezing the moment and saying yes to everything," he said. "If you say yes to everything in order not to rock the boat then you defeat democracy not safeguard it," he said.

"Democracy," he said, "is an end in itself, but it is also a means to respond to the needs of the country through assertive programmes and mechanisms which address the 'real problems'," Shiab concluded.

Marriott gets involved in greening Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — Following His Majesty King Hussein's public appeal toward a greener Jordan by the year 2000, Amman Marriott Hotel's management has announced its intention to be a part of this national responsibility.

The hotel staff have designated Feb. 1, 1990, as their tree planting day when they will be planting several kinds of trees in a location to be assigned by the Ministry of Agriculture.

"It is our hope that other companies and institutions in Jordan will follow the Marriott's example and take this national responsibility seriously," said Frank Keenan, the Marriott's general manager.

Keenan and the Marriott associates look forward with pride to their tree-planting day and hope they can make an annual event of it.

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BUSINESS MANAGER WANTED

International Development Organisation seeks:

Business Manager

For income-generation projects for women.

- * Jordanian male or female.
- * Business degree preferred.
- * Five years business experience & must (including cash flow analysis, production and stock control, team management and active problem solving approach).
- * Fluent in written and spoken English and Arabic.
- * Energetic and well-organised.
- * Works well with people.

Qualified applicants please phone 628760/656872

U.S. Top Grade Beef Homemade Pasta Fresh Seafood

Al Walima

Al Walima has a brand new menu... Try it out!!!

- Wednesday is steak night - Appetiser, steak and dessert for only JD 11 ++
- Quality guaranteed.
- Walk-ins welcome - Dress code: Casual.
- Children under 12 half price.
- Closed Sundays.

Al Walima restaurant is situated in Amman Marriott Hotel.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975

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Editorial and advertising offices:

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Telephones: 667171-4, 670141-4, 684311, 684366

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

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New threshold in inter-Arab ties

THE RESULTS of the just concluded two-day meeting of the Joint Jordanian-Syrian Higher Committee under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Madad Badran and his Syrian counterpart Mahmoud Zoubi are solid evidence that Syrian-Jordanian relations are proceeding in the right direction. The range and scope of the new agreements under the umbrella of the joint committee suggest that cooperation between the two countries are progressing in a new spirit of brotherhood and trust moulded more and more in an institutionalised framework. There is clearly an awareness now in the Arab World that the Arab states can ill afford to continue past policies of animosity. The historic changes that have occurred in the world in recent months, especially in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, have sounded the alarm in the Arab World that previous inter-Arab policies based on a highly personalised style are no longer workable. That this message has finally soaked in in the Arab body politic was visible in the candid talks that were held by Badran and Zoubi. It has become very clear to both sides that the dangers posed at the footsteps of the Arab Nation can no longer be ignored or bypassed in the same way that they have been in the past. Thus Jordan needs Syria as much as Syria needs Jordan in the face of the events and evolutions that are permeating the international scene.

Perhaps the scope of the recent agreements between Jordan and Syria are modest in scale, yet they usher an entirely new era in Syrian-Jordanian relations based on a sophisticated assessment of inter-Arab relations on the one hand and Arab-foreign relations on the other. The biggest test of seriousness of and depth of the mushrooming Syrian-Jordanian relations would be the Al Wadiah Dam and what concrete steps will be taken to translate this project into reality. The exploitation of the Yarmouk River waters in a sensible manner is no less urgent as the fair utilisation of the Euphrates River. The issue of water in the next decades will dwarf many other pressing subjects and the implementation of the already existing Jordanian-Syrian agreement to build the Al Wadiah Dam is the litmus test that would determine not only the trend in the Syrian-Jordanian relations but also the Arab awareness of the magnitude of the water issue. With the backdrop in mind there is much hope in Damascus and Amman that this week's talks will indeed take the two countries and peoples to a yet new threshold in the burgeoning relations between two Arab states.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Wednesday again dwelt on the question of Jewish emigration from the Eastern bloc countries to the occupied Palestinian land. The paper criticised the Soviet Union for allowing that to happen, and for not taking a firm stand in the face of the United States which is forcing the Jews to go to Palestine by closing the door to their arrival in America. The paper said that Washington is doing that so as to please Israel which welcomes the Jews to be settled on Arab land. The paper said that as the Jews arrive, we witness Israel's serious drive to evict the Palestinians from their own homeland, while the world watches without doing anything to prevent another tragedy from befalling the Arab people. It is true that the Soviet Union is coming under increasing pressure from the West to grant human rights to its citizens but when such rights encroach on the existence of another people, Moscow has to have a say in what is happening, the paper continued. The paper also blamed the Arabs for not taking a proper and united stand in the face of the looming danger and in the light of lack of unity within Arab ranks.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily says it is pointless to blame other countries for the plight of the Arab World which is now in disarray and impotent in the face of Israel's continued atrocities in occupied Palestine and the current emigration of Soviet Jews to Palestine. Tareq Masarweh says that the Israelis fought the Arabs in Palestine when they were half a million, and took all of Palestine when they became three million and no one knows that will happen when they increase by one million more. The writer says that the Arabs first of all ought to help intensify the uprising in the occupied territories by providing the necessary help to the Palestinians and then they ought to form a united front with all the thousands of Arab tanks and guns directed towards one target. The writer says it is true that the Arabs are not satisfied with the justifications given by Moscow for allowing Jews to emigrate to Palestine nor are they happy with Washington's continued support for aggression, but he adds, the Arabs are to blame now if they do not take the initiative and counter Israel's plans with meaningful action.

Al Dustour daily also discussed the question of Jewish immigration and said that Moscow's warning to Israel does not help to appease Arab wrath, nor does it respond to Arab demands. However, Washington's commentary on the question of emigration which also contained some criticism for such emigration as it might obstruct peace, shows that the whole world including Israel's allies now realise the grave danger inherent in such moves and underlines the need for a solution to the Palestine problem. Since both superpowers realise the danger, then there must be some way for coordinating their efforts to carry out a joint action designed to put an end to the plight of the Palestinians through the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, the paper added. It said that the Arabs however should not suffice themselves with the warnings and should not remain passive to the developments in the occupied lands, but ought to embark on a new diplomatic offensive at the international level.

THE "mystery" surrounding Arab women that has so often found itself into Western fiction novels and commentaries in the press evidently comes from a lack of contact. While Arab women are frequently described as silent, enigmatic in the West and by those who have had little or no contact with them, those who have, know that Arab women are not an "alien species." While the veil or scarf worn by many women in the Arab and Islamic world distinguishes them from others, they often wonder why are they looked upon as odd.

This week one Arab woman, who spent most of her life clad in a white chiffon scarf that covered not of her hair, speaks about poetry, her writings, her beliefs about women and Islam as well as her thoughts about social interaction in an Arab Muslim society.

Zuleikha Abu Rikhe is a well known Arab writer whose poetry and writings about women and Islam have often created fierce debate in the press in Jordan and elsewhere in the Arab World. As an educator she made attempts to put her particular imprint on Palestinian refugee children she taught at UNRWA schools for almost 19 years. As the daughter of a Sufi sheikh she learned that co-education was not un-Islamic. As the wife of a prominent member of the Muslim Brotherhood movement she experienced the changes in social thought that that movement went through in the last two decades. As a divorcee she was forced to deal with the realities of managing as a woman "on her own" in

Jordan of the 1980's. As a devout Muslim she chose to shed her scarf and declare that true believers need not be veiled.

As an emancipated woman she chose to adopt the emerging feminism in the Arab World. This week she speaks to Focus on People.

"I come from a family of poets, almost everyone in my family is a poet of some sort or another and thus writing poetry is a second nature to me," says Zuleikha. "When I was growing up and while at university I always read and wrote." Zuleikha graduated from the University of Jordan in 1966 with a degree in Arabic literature. She taught Arabic and Islam at UNRWA schools until recently when she became an administrator. During her work with UNRWA she attended many courses in education, Islamic studies, Arabic language before receiving her Masters degree in child education. She is now working on her PhD in child education and hopes to teach at higher institutions.

Zuleikha began publishing her works only recently, full with thoughts and experiences that accumulated over many years. Her teaching experience was extremely important, she says. It kept her in constant touch with the generations and allowed for an incredible exchange of ideas and thoughts. "While children learn from their elders, adults can also learn from children," she says. "Children are not effected by society's complex rules and are thus much more natural in their reactions. Children's literature

Focus on People

Veiled myths

By Mariam M. Shahin

is therefore very important, because it either reinforces 'natural' reactions or instill often complex societal rules." She believes that much of the children teaching material used in schools is translated and not original and that is "one of the reasons I began writing children books."

Along with children books Zuleikha writes about social issues and beliefs. She also writes poetry and prose in which she also tackles these issues. The first volume of her work, prose and poetry, was published in 1986 and was a "big success." She thought it was only natural, because "after all I was not a beginner. Even if I did not publish previously I had been writing all the time."

She believes that we now live in a new age and that literature must not only reflect the social thought of our times but question it as well. "After the end of colonialism there was a small Arab renaissance movement." That movement was short-lived, she says.

"Now we face new questions. Some are still related to (great powers) occupation of the Arab World in general and greater Syria in particular. After the destruction of Beirut in 1982, a part of our souls were also destroyed."

"While in the 1960s I found that my way of dressing was something that I considered my own personal style, in the 1970s and 1980s it became a matter of social concern. As strict Islamic trends spread women came under attack from other women if they continued to sit and converse with men even if veiled. While at the beginning of my marriage

to my husband of 19 years, who was a Muslim Brotherhood member, we would sit together in social gatherings as men and women, as time passed this was no longer possible. Social norms changed rapidly and all of the sudden my way of dressing was no longer a "personal matter; it was a social obligation."

While Zuleikha professes to be a devout Muslim she rejects social segregation of the sexes, the hijab and long coats worn by women.

"To me they have very little to do with Islam. From my interpretation, the Holy Koran does not oblige a woman to cover her hair. I resent those who preach that a woman who is not veiled cannot speak of Islam. I have had an Islamic education in my parental home, at the university and during my married life and I feel I am free to interpret and apply Islam to my lifestyle in the way I see fit," Zuleikha insists.

She believes that Islam is an extremely positive religion that allows for dynamism and encourages women's public participation.

She insists that certain people have misused Islam and that they hide under the cloak of religion to excuse their mentality of suppression of all people, particularly women and children.

"Some people have attempted to terrorise certain sectors of society in the name of Islam, but I know they will not succeed for long."

She says that religious terror can only exist in an environment of political terror, one breeds the other. The times of political terror are over and

that will be the fate of religious terror."

A patriarchal society, she says, is bound to use any weapon at its disposal to remain in power, the result is often a misuse of religion.

Zuleikha says that much of the religious and political terror was practised in the cities of the Arab World rather than the country side and thus pastoral and bedouin societies have on the whole been less touched by strict fundamentalism.

One aspect of her married and social life that bothered Zuleikha the most during the later part of her married life, which ended in a divorce three years ago, was the lack of questioning. "Discussions and questions were taboo and this created a reaction because even if there are taboos in any society you still have to discuss why the taboos exist otherwise you are challenged to discover them."

After divorcing her husband three years ago, because of "irreconcilable differences," Zuleikha felt that she was left "practically alone." Not only was she responsible for herself and her two children, society, she says, made her feel an outcast.

"People seem to be frightened of divorced women who lived on her own. 'There is a mystery about this woman,' they say, 'there is something wrong,'" she says.

Sooner after Zuleikha began to live on her own she entered Amman's cultural scene and became involved with the Writers Association and with all sort of intellectuals.

Along with cultural involve-

ment came the realisation of feminism. "My feminism comes from Islam. If one considers the human condition at the time Islam's birth and the rights that this religion gave women then you realise that feminism is imbedded in Islam. The scripture did not forbid a woman to work or limit her profession. It gave her the right to own property and be in control of her own finances," she says.

Referring to limitations often cited by some Islamists, Zuleikha says: "There are certain limitations which were clearly related to certain social conditions at the time, but have been interpreted, by some, to be valid for all times. Islam is a living religion and thus the scripture has allowed for adaptation to circumstance. Islam speaks of equality of people's regardless of race, age or sex. Some people who claim to speak in the name of Islam may have overlooked some of these points."

In October 1989, Zuleikha co-founded the Centre for Women Studies to further women issues. The centre's first public stand was during the case against Tujen Faisal, the Amman candidate to parliament who was charged by some fundamentalists with apostasy.

"Women's movements on the whole have tended to be superficial so far in Jordan. Limiting themselves to works of charity rather than questioning the social, economic and political status of women. But if men are to be liberated of their social complexes and problems you have to liberate women first, that's our goal," Zuleikha concludes.

The U.N. Decade of International Law 1990 — 1999

Commendable trends emerge in international relations

Dr. Milan Sahovic

THE NOTABLE changes in contemporary international relations naturally also affected the sphere of international law. International law, the development of which largely depends on the state and quality of the leading factors in international life — the great powers and their respective blocs, the Non-Aligned Movement and the developing countries — is gradually feeling the effects of the newly emerging political climate. There are now new prospects for the advancement of international cooperation by checking the arms-race, a more successful resolution by peaceful means of international regional and other disputes, the establishment of new mechanisms in the supervision of various state actions, enhancing the effectiveness of U.N. action, respect for the requirements of all states and nations in the political, economic, technological, environmental and other fields.

In view of the newly emerging situation the main protagonists of international developments are once again centering attention on international law. It has become necessary for international relations to rest on foundations corresponding to new conditions and this can only be effected by ensuring consistent and strict respect for the legal order in practice and by perfecting it to a measure which will ensure the enforcement of all fundamental, legal and socio-political functions. These are in point of fact the functions underlying the establishment of international law in the course of a hundred year-long process during which a universal international legal order was

steadily improved steering a precarious course between the Scylla and Charybdis in the battle between those upholding armed force and those advocating equitable cooperation. Past experience has confirmed that the greatest progress was made in the development of international law when the interests and stands of new socio-political forces were enabled to manifest and even to assert themselves, meaning during times of easing tension and the quest for new roads in this context.

The course of development in international relations and international law in the second half of the 20th century, after World War II, largely goes to confirm this statement. The signing of the U.N. Charter opened up a new phase in the history of international law, marked by stronger authority of its basic principles and rules on a world-wide scale, coming to particular expression in the successes scored in the field of progressive development and codification, the expansion of international law to ensure greater respect for human rights and the humanitarian constituent, economic law, institutional and supervisory mechanisms. The affirmation of the legal conception of peaceful and active coexistence among all states, translated into reality thanks to the activities of the Non-Aligned Movement and the inclusion in international law of anticolonial elements, stand for lasting results scored in the battle against Cold War policy, the arms race and the world's division into blocs. The road was long and arduous fraught with numerous upheavals, however the removal of objective and subjective reasons for continuing

tension in international life steadily changed the character of circumstances surrounding the progress of international law.

It is difficult at present to pronounce final judgment on the value of the changing attitude towards international law. Such an assessment requires considerable time to elapse and the careful recording of concrete results in order to confirm declarations seeking a stronger role of international law in new international circumstances. However, regardless of this point (not to be taken as the author's reservations, but as the result of earlier experiences not always beneficial after the acceptance of whatever major political statements, including those pertaining to international law) it is certain that major prerequisites have been created for more intensive universal state action, both in and outside the U.N., aimed at a more determined and more tangible transformation of international law into an even more effective instrument in regulating international relations and setting international disputes.

It is sufficient to list only some of the outstanding new moments recently evident in the field of international law in order to justify these expectations. The results scored and motions tabled at the 44th session of the U.N. General Assembly indicate possibilities for highly commendable trends in international law during the period ahead. Most important in this context is without doubt the decision to declare the 1990-1999 period as the U.N. Decade of International Law. The motion was tabled by the Non-Aligned Movement, based on the decisions of the ministerial confer-

ence of these countries convened at the Hague in June 1989 and adopted also at the ninth conference of heads of state or government, and so the U.N. General Assembly resolution determined the basic aims of the decade. It was further stated that a concrete programme should be adopted at the following 45th session after suitable consultations among the member-countries.

The fundamental objectives of the decade are: lending incentive to the acceptance of and respect for the principles of international law, promoting ways and means for the peaceful resolution of disputes, including respect for the rulings of the International Court of Justice, promoting the continued progressive development and codification of international law and the instruction, study and propagation of international law. These aims definitely include all actions undertaken as from this moment intended — in principle and in practice — to dovetail international law as it is today with all its strong points with current political, economic, social, scientific, technological, environmental and other conditions.

It is evident that conditions conducive to these aims to exist as illustrated by many earlier drives indicating that international rules and principles must be expanded to include new sectors. For, although much has been accomplished in strengthening foundations for the peaceful resolution of disputes, there have been many new motions on how to improve the various U.N. mechanisms and suggesting methods to this end. Special insistence was put on the competence of the International Court

of Justice; however there have also been demands for the drafting of a new convention on this issue. There have also been demands for completing the draft rules for a code on crimes against peace, security and humanity and corresponding jurisdiction of the courts, as well as for the establishment of an International Criminal Court for the prosecution of individuals and groups engaged in illegal drug traffic and engaged in other transnational criminal activities. The Commission for International Law has been requested to complete the draft rules on the uses for navigational purposes of international water ways and calling to account factors responsible for the damage caused by the latest scientific and technological achievements. It has also been planned to convene an international conference to define terrorism in order clearly to distinguish the latter from national liberation struggles.

All these motions should certainly be given due consideration in drafting the programme of the decade devoted to the continuing advancement of international law. However, there will certainly also be other motions tabled by the U.N. member states, scientific and other associations by the time the U.N. General Assembly reconvenes. It is therefore imperative to give serious and comprehensive consideration to the general range and broader competences of international law in relationship to the internal competences of various states and their sovereignty giving due attention to possible primacy of international law. In the latter case the Soviet Union made a notable contribution

when it declared itself in favour of such recognition. The role of the International Court of Justice and other judiciary establishments in relationship to the state in instances of human rights and generally speaking is also a point to be considered carefully. All these questions must be closely studied if the role of international law is genuinely to carry greater weight in the modern world. One has to admit that as it stands today the possibilities for resorting to international law have virtually been exhausted. Strengthening efforts towards integration and institutionalisation among all states in the international sphere, regardless of their international orders, by far exceed the conception of coexistence (no matter how active this coexistence may be) on which traditional rulings in international law have so far been founded. Consequently a way out of disputed situations arising with increasing frequency in this sphere must be sought in new breakthroughs.

Considering all these points one can easily understand why the initiatives of the non-aligned countries to give increasing attention to international law have during the past ten years met with the understanding and support of other countries. It would be highly commendable if during this decade the world's states were in their daily actions and regular practice to show more respect for their international legal obligations, if these were to be strictly applied, demonstrating respect for the rules and principles of international law in general — Review of International Affairs, Belgrade.

Japan's angry women seek vengeance at polls

By Nao Nakamishi
Reuters

TOKYO — Last time angry Japanese women flexed their political muscles they humbled the ruling party, but analysts doubt that even their mass hostility at February 18 lower house elections will be able to shake the party's 34-year hold on power.

It was women's fury over financial and sex scandals and an income sales tax that sparked the July 1989 voter revolt that saw the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lose control of the upper house of parliament.

Analysts said they found female voters still furious despite

desperate LDP efforts to placate them in the run-up to next month's crucial election.

But a combination of a split opposition, a complex electoral system and apparent male reluctance this time to back the women's anti-LDP crusade seems likely to result in the ruling party squeaking back, either by winning a bare majority itself or by recruiting conservative independents.

"It is difficult to forecast exactly what is going to happen in next month's elections," said Michi-toshi Takabatake, politics professor at Rikkyo University.

"But one thing is certain: women have remained angry and

bitter against the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). They don't easily forget the Recruit (shares-for-favours) scandal and the sales tax," he said.

With its inept introduction of the three per cent sales tax, Recruit and the sex indiscretions of ephemeral Prime Minister Sosuke Uno, the party managed to outrage most voters but particularly women who, political analysts say, played a big part in their humiliating defeat.

At the height of public disaffection last July, in the elections when the LDP lost its upper house majority for the first time since the 1950s, a record 22

women won seats, all but two for opposition parties.

Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu, chosen by LDP elders to lift the party's sinking fortunes, set about wooing back the female vote. He appointed a woman to the key double post of chief cabinet secretary and government spokeswoman, proposed revising the unpopular sales tax, and began work on plans for political reform.

Kaifu's efforts failed to impress voters, many of whom told pollsters they wanted to see more drastic change. To a cynical public, the cabinet spokeswoman was just a token, a powerless puppet

of the old male establishment.

A record 68 women are expected to run in next month's elections for the 512-seat lower house, though that chamber's electoral system makes it more difficult for novices to compete against veteran politicians.

"It's not Eastern Europe where democracy is retarded," shouts housewife Kaiko Muramori, campaigning for a woman candidate in Tokyo. "It is here in Japan."

Toshihiko Hara, professor of sociology at Tokai University, said: "The female voters are still furious. The difference from last July is that now they are failing to mobilise the men, who have begun calculating their business in-

terests. "Male voters are not going along because they know that the emotional approach, while striking, does not help much to change reality. Men are cooler and more realistic," he said.

While the election result looks like being very close, most analysts expect the LDP to hang on to power, either by winning a bare majority themselves or by making up the necessary 257 seats by recruiting conservative independents.

Women are not expected to make such an impact this time as they did in the upper house election, partly due to the electoral system.



In recent years, computers invaded many Jordanian homes. The Ministry of Education has already introduced computers at certain schools. In the following report Nur Sati explores the extent to which people accepted the machine.

Many computers, few users, fewer specialists

AMMAN — While computers set the trend of our times and contribute to advancements in all fields, Jordan's few computer users have only a scant idea of what the machine can do.

No one denies that the computer industry has gained momentum throughout the years. According to statistics from the Jordan Computer Society, Jordan boasts some 80 registered computer companies, ten of which are hardware vendors, three software agents and two vendors of accessories and consumables.

Even though there may not be enough software agents, most of the software is developed locally, says Youssef Barghouti, general manager of General Computer Company. But software development takes time and effort. To aim for high quality packages you need proper attention, otherwise, quality may not reach the level of excellence required, some vendors say.

According to Barghouti, between 1986 and 1988 the government, with help from the United States, spent \$3 million on hardware, but neglected software.

"The government can be more helpful towards software needs," says Ghassan Abdullah, former president of the Jordan Computer Society. He adds that all the tenders advertised by govern-

ment institutions focus on computer hardware. The result, according to an official survey, was that 80 per cent of the money was spent on hardware while only 11 per cent on software and the remaining on consultancy and services.

Because of such market trends and tough competition, software piracy has become a habitual phenomena affecting both imported and local products. Barghouti suggests that the government allocate a certain percentage of its computer budgets for locally developed software.

While some agree to such investments others maintain that some vendors abuse the budget out of ignorance. A computer vendor says that only very few agents realise the cost of software, be it quality control or customer training etc. While some vendors make some efforts towards improving people's awareness, new vendors appear on the market repeating the same mistakes and thus stunting growth.

As all competition emerged at once the vital need for an organised system and for set regulations to govern computer development in the country was neglected. "The computer business is such that trial and error has become a popular method,"

says a computer vendor.

Not only does the vacuum of software development need to be filled but awareness amongst the people is a vital element that has not been awarded enough attention.

"We want the population at large to feel comfortable with the idea of computers being friendly gimmicks," says Hazem Milhem, director of Jordan Computer Centre. He targets the mass population and so far only about 30 per cent buy computers.

Although computers are seen more frequently at the homes and offices of many people, the popular feeling is still one of anxiety towards the machine. For many, it is an untouchable and powerfully delicate machine that may break out of control.

Milhem explains that it is not a surprising reaction. Whereas in the West, computers are seen everywhere such as at airports, bus stations, hotels, etc, people have established a direct relationship with the machine. But in Jordan, the level of adapting to the idea of a computer being friendly has not yet reached the people because the machines hide behind closed doors.

With the personal computer (PC) entering schools and most homes, it has created more awareness. Milhem explains that

the PC attracts children who can use it to play games, students who can rely on the machine to conduct their researches and professionals who, with computer help, can create sophisticated spreadsheets and databases. He adds that in order to encourage the computer market and broaden people's awareness, there should be proper campaigning and extra computer centres for teachers and students, in addition to more exhibitions and seminars.

According to Yasser Hussein, field service manager at the Computer Communications Systems Company, the issue of awareness has to do with the problem of language. Jordanians do not even have the basic skills of the English language, which make it difficult for them to communicate with the computer. Moreover, Hussein says that the standard of the computer curricula at universities and college is below average.

According to a computer vendor, students graduate with computer "design and programming" degrees yet they fail miserably on the practical level.

Many in the computer business say that the end user has also created a vacuum as well as encouraged misconceptions. "The end user is price conscious without any concern for quality or

after sales support and service." A computer vendor adds that the end user often does not care to spend money on training and expects the vendor to "spoon-feed" his staff. Computer vendors say that the end user has ostracised the consultant and misused its role by expecting free consultancy and advice.

What can be done about all this? Abdullah says that the situation must change if the market is to reach the level of satisfaction and coherence that exists in other countries.

A few years ago, the Jordan Computer Society was created causing everyone to rejoice at the prospect of a body that would review the problems and bring about solutions. Unfortunately, many in the business say that the society has no effective role or influence at any level.

Although it does hold seminars, send out news letters and give advice to the vendors, it was clearly not satisfying to the needs. It is never too late to create rules, set standards and enhance organisation. But action is needed quickly or more chaos will set in and the end user will continue to take advantage of the situation and in turn create more havoc, say many computer vendors.

Marrakesh blooms ease Europe winter gloom

By Stephen Hughes
Reuters

MARRAKESH, Morocco — The winter roses of Marrakesh have no scent but they make a sweet profit.

Morocco's proximity to Europe has made growing roses big business with exporters enjoying a boom that has shown no sign of a let-up in the past decade.

And the long-stemmed blooms growing in profusion in the gardens of this red-walled city are in great demand in European centres during winter.

Exports have more than tripled in five years from 300 to 1,100 tonnes, according to Ampex-flora, the association of flower producers and exporters.

Exports received a boost when the national carrier Royal Air Maroc slashed freight costs for cut flowers a year ago.

The association's president, Casablanca commercial lawyer and former newspaper editor Mohammed Berrada, said: "I thought it would be nice and romantic growing roses for a living. It still is, but it's damned hard work too."

He is typical of Moroccan floriculturists who have abandoned other professions like the civil service to devote themselves to the booming cut flower business.

Among them are former citrus fruit growers who have found that growing roses pays more. The climate of southern Morocco is ideal for winter flower cultivation, but the crops have to be protected from the hot sun by domes of plastic film, and irrigated with spray systems.

Why is it that Marrakesh roses have no scent? Berrada explained that flowers grown for export are a special hardy species with no perfume and they will last for at least a week.

"If it smells good it is no good for us because it will only last a day or two," he said.

In the last 10 years, annual production has grown phenomenally from 80 to 2,300 tonnes. Marrakesh roses account for 80 per cent of total output in the country.

Operators are reluctant to reveal profit margins, but a dozen roses can be bought in the local flower market for \$1.50. A single rose can cost much more at a Parisian florist.

They are shipped by air mainly to France, which takes 75 per cent of total exports, and also to West Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Britain, Italy, Sweden, Canada and the United States.

Producers rely on advanced techniques perfected in other countries like the Netherlands, the world's biggest cut flower exporter.

Randa Habib's
Corner

Welcome back

Randa Habib is the Jordan correspondent of Agence France Presse (AFP). Today she resumes writing her weekly column after an absence of (...)

It has been a long time. Too long. One year, two years... I stopped counting. But why look back? Things have changed, and in this open atmosphere, and of the freedom of expression that we enjoy today, I simply could not turn down the offer that was made to me to bring back to life this corner.

George Herwatzsch, the old-new editor of the Jordan Times, told me on the phone yesterday: "Welcome back". And back I am. I hope, however, that I will be welcomed by all of you. So we will meet in the same space, every Thursday, for humour and laughter more than for gloom and bitterness, and for the sake of being constructive rather than being passive.

Walls have fallen in Eastern Europe. Here too. The Soviet Union has had its perestroika. We now have our Jordanistika. The winds of democracy have finally blown over the Eastern hemisphere. Winds of change are blowing over our hills, uncovering the beautiful grass that is growing underneath them. And despite our economic problems and the heavy burdens of our debts, we can shout loud: We are free. Free at last to dream. For the dream is our ticket to tomorrow, and our way to true salvation.

So the material is there, waiting for us to pick it up. We hope and trust that our institutions will provide us with all the ingredients we need. After all, in addition to the traditional targets of this column, we have 120 more people, under the dome of parliament. Just imagine the possibilities.

Not-again mood grips Venice

By Victor L. Simpson
The Associated Press

VENICE, Italy — Even as Venice enjoys a winter hibernation that allows the echoes of footsteps to resound in the nearly deserted squares, the specter of Pink Floyd refuses to go away.

A summer concert by the British rock group that drew more than 100,000 young people and left the city awash in garbage is a recurring nightmare.

It is being used as ammunition in a battle being waged over a bid to make Venice the site of an international fair in the year 2000 and has led officials to bar carnival celebrations from famed St. Mark's square.

Pink Floyd was allowed to perform on a floating stage in the Venice lagoon in July after the rock group agreed to reduce its decibel level to protect the colonnaded square and ninth-century basilica.

But the trash left behind by the concertgoers and the sight of thousands sleeping in the streets proved too much for many Venetians.

St. Mark's, said fine arts commissioner Margherita Asso in banning the annual carnival from the massive square, "was attacked by vandals and there wasn't, and still isn't, sufficient police protection."

So carnival will go on in other parts of the city judged less fragile, inaugurated Feb. 10 by a procession up the Grand Canal led by a 25-metre-long floating replica of a bottle of Italian bubbly.

Pre-Lent merry-making is not the only talk of Venice. There is also the bid, put forward by the Veneto region, to make Venice and nearby cities the site of Expo 2000.

Backers include such powerful figures as Venetian-born Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis, who also supported the Pink Floyd concert. The Socialist official, the author of a guide to discos in Italy, had said Venice must be open to all forms of culture, including rock music.

The fair is seen as a way of breathing new life into this city of canals and marble palaces, whose year-round population has dwindled to 80,000 from 130,000 over the past 25 years. Exhibitions would feature science and culture.

With the proper controls, said de Michelis, Expo 2000 would be "the right way to bring Venice into the new century."

Those in favour insist the fair could attract new businesses and lead to the renovation of housing and neighbourhoods that have decayed as young people have gone to the mainland in search of jobs.

They have left Venice to the summer tourists and, to the lament of many locals, cheap souvenir shops and pizza parlors catering to day-trippers with backpacks. Such tourism has inspired calls for daily quotas on the number of visitors.

"I am one of those who believe the idea (of a fair) should be examined, not just written off," said Venice's cultural commissioner, Fulgenzio Liveri, sitting in his office looking out onto St. Mark's square, frequented by almost as many pigeons as people this time of the year.

He sees it as an opportunity to attract two industries "ideally suited" to the lagoon city — films and fashions.

But Liveri admits that the "Pink Floyd effect" is still running strong.

Graffiti and posters declaring "no to Expo" have gone up in the distinctive narrow lanes near the Rialto bridge, while someone has scrawled "de Michelis, repent" on the easeway linking Venice to Mestre on the mainland.

In December, a small group of Venetians took their protest to Paris, holding up signs outside the offices of the international committee that will select the host city. The other candidates are Hannover, West Germany, and Toronto, Canada.

The committee is expected to make its decision in June.

For a city so dependent on outsiders, even those catering to tourists seem to have had their fill and hope Venice is kept out of the plans.

Tea — a possible cancer inhibitor?

By Miao Hong

DRINK tea and drink it often. Then you are likely to be free of the malignant tumour of esophagus. This was an initial conclusion drawn by a group of medical scientists from the Institute of Nutrition and Food Hygiene under the Chinese Academy of Preventive Medicine.

"Our three-year research has revealed tea's new value in cancer prevention," said Professor Wang Huaizhou, a 71-year-old research fellow of the institute. "We believe that the polyphenol contents in tea work the miracle," he added.

The professor said further analysis has yet to be made to fully identify the polyphenol contents. But it is generally known that tea leaves contain alkaloid caffeine, tannin, volatile oil, etc., and when infused with boiling water have mild stimulant and tonic properties.

A generally recognised cancer-causing substance is nitroso compound. To test whether tea is capable of blocking the formation of this deadly compound, the researchers first studied 17 types of tea in 1986. They found that Oolong and green tea were the most effective in blocking the synthesis of nitroso compound.

In 1988, they studied 145 types of tea collected from the country's major tea-producing areas in Zhejiang, Anhui, Fujian and Jiangxi provinces. The tests showed that green tea's blocking rate was over 90 per cent, the highest of the 145. Following green tea are brick tea, Jasmine, Oolong and black tea.

"We also found that tea's function to block the cancer-causing compound is closely related to the way it is processed and the period of its storage," Wang said.

The tea kept in a tin for one year, for instance, could have its blocking rate reduced by 10 per cent. And after the tea is infused, he said, the longer the tea water is laid undisturbed, the less effective it will be at blocking the formation of nitroso compound.

To make sure about tea's effect on inhibiting N-nitrosation — the process of converting to nitroso

compound — inside human bodies, 14 adult males, all non smokers, volunteered to take part in the tea-drinking test.

"They were divided into two groups, one drunk tea before breakfast and the other after it," said Prof. Wang. "Then we examined their urines and found the nitroso proline excreted decreased significantly."

He said the test proved that both green tea and black tea could inhibit N-nitrosation, but drinking tea after meal had better blocking effects than before it.

In another safe experiment, Wang said, 12 volunteers (four males and eight females) were given one, three or five grammes of

green tea respectively in different periods. "The results showed that three to five grammes of tea, which was brewed twice, each time with 150 millilitres of boiling water, could effectively block the formation of nitroso compound inside human bodies," the professor said.

Two other animal experiments conducted by Professor Han Chi of the same institute, further verified tea's cancer-inhibiting effect.

"This time we used 280 laboratory rats and we divided them into seven groups," she said. "We injected two pro-drugs — sodium nitrite and methylbenzylamine — into the rats. The drugs converted to a strong carcinogenic substance inside those rats' bodies.

Then the researchers let one group of rats drink tap water and the other six drink different kinds of tea. Twelve weeks later, Prof. Han said esophageal cancer appeared in 95 per cent of rats in the tap-water group while the incidence was only 5 to 19 per cent in the tea-drinking groups.

In the other animal experiment, Han said, researchers directly poured a kind of carcinogenic substance — NMBZ — into the throats of another 154 rats and also gave one group the simple tap water treatment and the others tea.

"Then we found that 90 per cent of rats in the water group

contracted carcinoma of esophagus while the incidence rate was 42-67 per cent in the other groups," she said. The lowest incidence rate (42 per cent) went with the group treated with Fujian Oolong tea.

Although the researchers of the institute have proved tea's positive effect in blocking the formation of cancer-causing substance in esophagus, Prof. Wang Huaizhou described what has been achieved as "initial."

"Further study has to be made to fully identify the polyphenol contents in tea," he said, "and to reveal the relationship between tea-drinking and cancer incidence." — China features.

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GCC gas grid faces host of uncertainties

DUBAI (R) — A proposal for a Gulf-wide natural gas pipeline grid is unlikely to be anything more than just a plan on paper until uncertainties over a whole set of practical problems have been cleared away, Gulf industry analysts say.

Uncertainty about future local supply and demand for gas, and the unknown variable of future international gas market prices holding the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states back from jumping into a project which would take billions of dollars and years to complete, they said.

"Although they are very close to each other, uncertainties over the future make it difficult to commit themselves to long-term arrangements," one oil industry executive said.

Qatar is developing the biggest single natural gas reservoir in the world, called the North Field, and is particularly keen to have its GCC partners buy its gas, the analysts said.

Other GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Bahrain — are expected to express their level of interest in Qatari gas in line with a request made at a GCC experts meeting in Doha last month, the analysts said.

But oil industry sources said that while rising gas consumption

in the Gulf states may force them sometime in the next century to link supplies, but a large scale gas pipeline grid is out of the question in the short-term.

The GCC members, most of them major crude oil producers, own around 14 per cent of the world's known natural gas reserves.

"There is an interest in neighbouring countries for gas from Qatar, and we are conducting a feasibility study on this," Jaber Al Marri, managing director of Qatar General Petroleum Corporation (QGPC), said in Doha last week.

"The demand for natural gas is rising and they (the GCC states) want to maximise gas utilisation mainly for power generation," he said in an interview.

Marri said Qatar is now discussing exporting gas to the emirate of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which has embarked on various power and industrial expansion projects.

Kuwait, which is currently buying gas from Iraq, could be a future customer, oil industry sources in Qatar said.

They said a 200-mile underwater pipe is needed to connect North Field to Dubai and from there it could extend to Oman.

Talks with Dubai centre on Dubai's gas needs, which are estimated between 200 million to 600 million cubic feet a day, and on the cost of the gas and the pipeline, they added.

The GCC members, dependent on crude oil and product exports for most of their income, have started to develop gas based industries, mainly petrochemicals, in the last 10 years to diversify their economies.

Most of the natural gas currently produced in the Gulf is in the form of associated gas, a by-product of crude oil, and most other Gulf states are also boosting their own gas output.

Oil industry analysts believe that planned gas-based industries and general expansion in most GCC states will also boost gas demand, but say it is difficult to say by how much.

Saudi Arabia is the biggest gas user but "the associated gas production in Saudi Arabia will increase as the kingdom has launched a programme to raise its crude output," one oil industry executive said.

The kingdom has also increased its non-associated gas production to meet rising domestic demand.

Negotiators unblock impasse on GATT tariff discussions

GENEVA (R) — International trade officials agreed Tuesday after more than six months of bargaining on a procedure to negotiate tariff cuts.

A series of intensive private consultations at the 105-Nation Uruguay Round of world trade talks produced an accord that was adopted at a formal meeting Tuesday of a group negotiating on tariffs, a spokesman for the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) said.

He said many delegations described the agreement as a considerable step forward for both the tariff negotiations in particular and the Uruguay Round in general.

Under the procedure all participating countries will submit proposals for reducing, eliminating and binding tariffs on imports by March 15.

Binding a tariff means fixing it at a level above which it may not be increased without offering another trade concession as compensation.

The first of a series of further meetings to review and assess initial offers will be held not later than April 18. Negotiators will aim to table preliminary requests for improving offers by April 30, the spokesman said.

Delegates said that, with the

four-year Uruguay Round due to end next December, it was essential for this major sector to move ahead into a substantive phase.

Progress had been blocked by deep disagreement between the United States and most other delegations over what negotiating procedure to follow.

Many countries favoured using a mathematical formula for a coordinated reduction of tariff duties by an overall average of about 30 per cent. The U.S. had advocated a "request and offer" method, under which it would ask for tariff cuts on given products, and offer to lower one of its own for each reduction.

The U.S. argued that most of its tariff rates were already low. But some other countries held that Washington's approach reflected a desire to protect sensitive industries, such as textiles, where the U.S. tariff is still relatively high.

The GATT spokesman, replying to reporters' questions, said the agreed procedure allowed countries either to use a formula approach in their offers, or to table individual offers and requests. Although not ideal, it was the best way, given the political and economic constraints and limitations, he said.

ECONOMIC NEWS BRIEFS

Bahrain, Harken sign oil deal

BAHRAIN (R) — Bahrain signed a contract with the U.S. firm Harken Petroleum Tuesday to drill for oil and gas off its northern coast, the Gulf News Agency (GNA) quoted Industry and Development Minister Youssef Shirawi as saying. Shirawi said Harken, a Texas-based "wildcat" firm, would carry out a three-year exploration programme off the islands of Muharraq and Umm Nasan and on the coral reef of Fasht Al Jarim. If drilling was successful, profits would be shared between Harken and the Bahrain National Petroleum Company for 35 years, Shirawi said. The report gave no further details. Wildcat wells are drilled with little seismic information about underlying rock formations. Bahrain produces about 45,000 barrels per day (b/d) from dwindling oil reserves which are expected to run out by the turn of the century. It buys most of the oil for the 250,000 b/d refinery from Saudi Arabia. It also produces about 700 million cubic feet a day of gas from estimated reserves of about 10,000 billion cubic feet.

65,000 Malaysian workers strike

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — More than 65,000 Malaysian plantation workers began a nationwide strike Wednesday to press for a monthly wage scheme, while emergency talks to head off the dispute collapsed. Acting Labour Minister Lee Kim Sai summoned plantation owners and the workers' union to a three-hour meeting in the capital, hours after the strike began, but the meeting ended in a deadlock. The strike, which affects mainly the rubber and oil palm estates, threatens to cripple Malaysia's commodity sector. Malaysia is the world's largest palm oil and rubber producer. Lee threatened to take the dispute to the industrial court, a move that would automatically end the strike, if no compromise emerged Wednesday. He said he would decide after the National Union of Plantation Workers held an emergency council meeting Friday. Thursday is a public holiday.

Efforts to expand in Britain

PARIS (R) — French oil giant Elf said it was negotiating to buy U.S.-based Amoco's 250 petrol stations in Britain as part of a new strategy to expand overseas. State-controlled Societe Nationale Elf Aquitaine did not disclose financial details of the planned deal, which would make it the tenth biggest petrol retailer in Britain, but analysts gave a price tag of about \$600 million. Elf, which already has 450 petrol stations in Britain, will double its share of the market to four per cent if the deal goes through, Chairman Loik Le Floch-Prigent said. Le Floch-Prigent estimated Elf's 1989 net profit at more than seven billion francs (\$1.23 billion) compared with 7.21 billion francs (\$1.27 billion) in 1988. Gross earnings in fact rose 40 per cent, buoyed by high oil output and high prices, but net profit was reduced three billion francs (\$525 million) by a decision to write down the book value of the phosphate and soda ash assets of Texasgulf, a U.S. firm in which Elf has an 85 per cent stake.

IDB gives Turkey loan, grant

ANKARA (R) — Turkey signed with the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank (IDB) for a \$10 million credit and a \$5 million grant, Turkish treasury officials said. Officials said the grant and the 20-year credit, with a five-year grace period, would help to finance infrastructure projects and the building of homes in the western city of Izmir for ethnic Turkish refugees from Bulgaria.

Ershad demands end to 'decade of despair'

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Bangladesh President Hussain Mohammad Ershad Tuesday urged industrialised countries to reduce crushing Third World debt and draw the developing world into the economic mainstream and out of a "decade of despair."

Ershad, in a speech to the non-aligned Group of 77, warned that half a billion people in the least developed countries, including Bangladesh, remain "on the margin of existence" and need international support.

"The restoration of growth in the LDCs (least developed countries) will require substantial increase in development assistance," he said.

For the underdeveloped countries, Ershad said, the 1980s were

a decade of socio-economic stagnation.

"What was to be a decade of development became a decade of despair," he said. Average per capita income declined for most of the decade, and unemployment and illiteracy rose, he said.

Ershad said overseas development assistance, ODA, must move towards an agreed target of .15 per cent of the donor's gross national product (GNP) or alternatively doubling aid for the least developed countries.

"Donors should consider doubling the present level of ODA in the next five years," Ershad said. In the long term they should aim at revising the target to .20 per cent of their GNP to least developed nations, he said.

He praised the Toronto summit of industrialised nations, which agreed last year to some debt

relief. But added initiatives taken since then are still very inadequate. He said the burden of debt must be lifted "at least to the point where their economies can grow out of their overwhelming indebtedness."

He said it also is necessary to decisively reduce the overall debt stock of the least developed countries and substantially reduce their multilateral and commercial debt obligations.

The least developed countries need more help if they are to join the world economy, Ershad said. He cited stabilisation of commodity prices and fair compensation to the countries for shortfalls in export earnings due to market fluctuations.

Access to markets, less protectionism, exemption from quota and full duty-free treatment of the least developed countries' exports also are vital, the president said.

EIU sees quick East Bloc adoption of market economy

LONDON (R) — East European nations are likely to move rapidly towards free markets irrespective of economic and political problems facing Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev, an independent British research group said Wednesday.

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) said failure to implement radical economic reform in the Soviet Union resulted from clear divisions in the ruling Politburo but it forecast that Moscow's former satellite states would be well placed to use cheap labour to step up exports to the West.

"Disunity in the Politburo is... one reason why the scope of perestroika remains so limited four years into Mr. Gorbachev's tenure of power and why its results have been so meagre," the research group said in its 1990 World Outlook.

The EIU, part of the group which also publishes the weekly newspaper The Economist, said disenchantment with 40 years of central planning and the West's linking of assistance to reform meant East Bloc nations would transform their economies swiftly.

It said it was too late to turn the clock back in Eastern Europe after the sweeping changes of 1989 even if the Soviet president were removed from office in a neo-Stalinist backlash.

But it said reform could cause considerable disruption for the consumers of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and the West.

The EIU forecast:

— The downfall of the Ceausescu regime in Romania will lead to cutbacks in food supplies to the Soviet Union as the new Bucharest government feeds its own people. Fifteen per cent of Soviet imports of fresh and frozen meat come from Romania and 10 per cent of imports of processed meat, poultry and vegetables. The Soviet Union may have to buy more food on the world market.

— The move to democracy in Czechoslovakia and East Germany is bad news for Poland and Hungary. Western investment could be diverted to the more heavily industrialised nations and outlying European Community nations such as Portugal could also suffer.

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Iran five-year plan wins final approval

TEHRAN (R) — Iran's five-year economic plan won final approval Wednesday after minor changes in parliament.

"Thank God, through efforts of the Majlis (parliament) and the Guardian Council the five-year plan won final approval just now," Majlis Speaker Mehdi Karrubi said at an open session.

The plan, which aims for an eight per cent annual growth and allows the use of \$27.6 billion of foreign credit, is central to President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's efforts to rebuild the economy after the eight-year war with Iraq.

Parts of the plan, originally passed by parliament Jan. 9, were vetoed by the Guardian Council, a committee of six Islamic theologians and six lawyers, which ensures laws do not violate Islamic principles or the constitution.

Parliament made a few minor changes Wednesday to incorporate the council's views.

But it left unchanged the only controversial point, a clause which forbids the conversion of farmland and fruit orchards to non-agricultural use.

The council had ruled that this conflicted with the right of the individual to his property under Islamic law, according to the head of the Majlis plan and budget committee Morteza Amini.

Exemptions were included in the government regulations and the council was apparently convinced later that this was enough to meet its objections.

Final approval of the plan gives Rafsanjani a free hand to implement his policies to revive industrial production and give a greater role to the private sector in the economy.

His plan was backed by the influential Tehran militant clergy-men parliamentary group which includes some of the most vocal critics of foreign borrowing.

"Our society hopes to move towards reconstruction and stability after the approval of the five-year plan and the readiness of Mr. Rafsanjani's government to implement it," the group said in a statement published in Ettelaat newspaper Tuesday.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Wednesday, January 31, 1990
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell	French franc	114.8	115.9
U.S. dollar	659.0	665.0	Dutch guilder	456.3	460.9
Pound Sterling	1106.1	1117.2	Swedish crown	107.2	108.3
Deutschmark	389.9	393.8	Italian lira (for 100)	52.5	53.0
Swiss franc	439.8	444.2	Belgian franc (for 10)	186.6	188.5

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.6830/40	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1880/90	Canadian dollar
	1.6803/10	Deutschmarks
	1.8945/55	Dutch guilders
	1.4892/902	Swiss francs
	35.13/17	Belgian francs
	5.7050/100	French francs
	1249/1250	Italian lire
	144.20/30	Japanese yen
	6.1000/400	Swedish crowns
	6.4885/35	Norwegian crowns
	6.4935/85	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	416.50/417.00	U.S. dollars

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

SYDNEY — Profit-taking in the gold sector and a late sell-off among the industrials drove Australia's share market into a sharp retreat after Tuesday's gold-inspired rally. The All Ordinaries Index fell 18.9 to close at 1677.0.

TOKYO — Index-linked buying from investment trust funds with bundles of new cash helped lift share prices out of their troughs, but they still closed slightly lower in scant trade. The Nikkei ended down 26.72 at 37,188.95.

HONG KONG — Stocks closed lower after a very quiet day's trade dominated by trading in selected blue chips. The Hang Seng Index closed down 9.20 points at 2,751.60.

SINGAPORE — The market closed on mixed note after a day of active trading saw selective buying. The Straits Time index closed 3.13 points lower at 1,515.01.

BOMBAY — Share prices fell sharply for the second day on heavy nervous selling over fears of a fourth India-Pakistan war. The Bombay Index plummeted 17.76 points to 683.32.

FRANKFURT — West German shares closed higher as the market's underlying positive mood returned. The Dax index closed at 1,822.78 up 9.88 points from Tuesday's close.

ZURICH — Good demand for Swiss insurers' registered shares brought a firmer tone to the market and prices recovered to close slightly firmer. The SPI index rose 2.6 to 1,102.3.

PARIS — Share prices ended lower in a very thin market with investors reluctant to take a lead from Wall Street's higher trend amid continued uncertainty over the world economic outlook. The CAC-40 index ended 9.15 points down at 1,882.88.

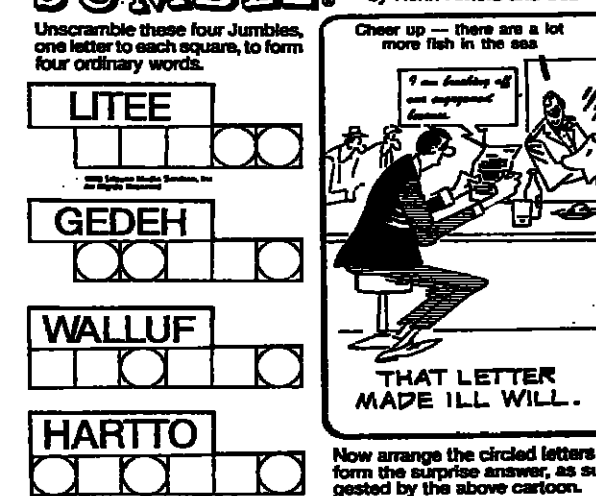
LONDON — Shares were firmer near the close, but it was from few special situations rather than conviction the market had turned around. By 1554 GMT the FTSE was 11.6 up at 2,333.6.

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



"Oh, all right — I'll keep my cold feet on my own side of the bed!"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

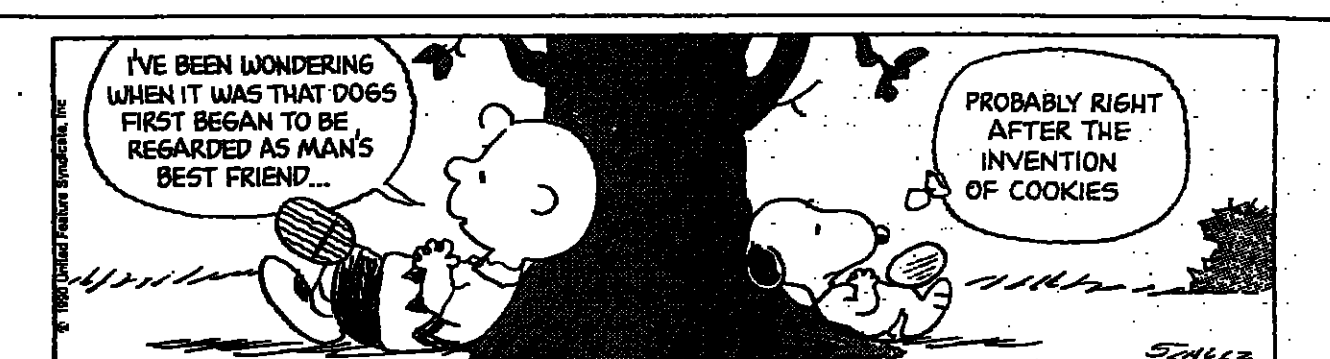


Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ADAGE EMERY SLEEPY MUSTER
Answer: What that wild animal trainer at the circus does — "TAMES" TO PLEASE

Peanuts



Mutt'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY FEBRUARY 1, 1990

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: This is a good day to go directly to those who are your partners or opponents to tell them exactly what you have in mind and would like to do that requires some additional effort.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19)

You can go forward and meet those interesting contacts you have anticipated. Take your family with you to enjoy some public or community event.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20)

Discuss long-term desires for going to a pleasant resort with a knowledgeable friend. You and your attachment will enjoy some outside entertainment or recreation.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21)

A trip to see close companions with good friends brings happiness to all involved. Be with your attachment as much as you are able.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21)

Go Dutch with understanding friends at places of amusement. You need some fresh new inspiration to improve your attachment.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21)

Explaining true facts of a situation will ward off family arguments. Combine usual pleasures with some persons you have just met for mutual happiness.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22)

Accept help from a progressive

friend with daily duties. You see the best way to convince business ally to go along with your views.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You can give your confidence now, for very reliable friends are about you. Accompanying your attachment to recreations will bring you new romance.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Much pleasure will come from recreation, amusements with friends. Being with congenial friends at quiet pleasures delights your mind.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Now you can make good friends with persons in places of importance. There are ways to please your family, so don't hesitate but do so at once.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A new start on your regular business affairs brings good results. Don't get emotionally involved at home with a family member.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Get out in the world of action with good friends and enjoy yourself. Invite those to whom you feel emotional or even passionately drawn into your home.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Organize your business and money affairs so you do not get fatigued. Delightful outside contacts should be entertained as guests in your home.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY FEBRUARY 2, 1990
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Don't force an association with a newcomer to whom you are attracted into your circle of friends. You can easily make your home more attractive and quiet.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Take your family with you to some fine outside places of recreation. Let attachment know in little ways the extent of your devotion.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Make sure you drive carefully on jumps to see relatives and companions. A good day to get every single condition at your home in the peak of condition.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Your best time socially can now be on trips with good friends. Very good time for important discussions and having a good time with your family.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) If you have duties to perform for family do them without insisting others aid you. Do not bring up subjects that you and your family do not see eye-to-eye.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Go forward with some modern improvements to your activities, but do so without haste. Surprising surprises that occur at your residence need to be taken in stride.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Garner information from every possible source that will aid you with routine activities. Don't get involved in discussion of length over unimportant business details.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't be so preoccupied with pleasure that you forget to thank friends who made them possible. You have a good chance to get your family approval for a new course of action.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You now can make a very good ally and friend in one of high position. The time is not quite ripe for that trip that so appeals to you and your mate.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get family finances under control so they be better used to everyone's advantage. A wonderful day to express love and affection for your attachment.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Fine for some very interesting visits to see kin, friends, close business and personal companions. Most everything of a practical nature will work out at your home.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Delay in a trip with an older friend now, is all to the best interests of you both. Invite younger persons into your home to lighten atmosphere.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH

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HANDLED WITH CARE

Both vulnerable West deals.

NORTH
♠ 10 6 5 4
♥ K 7 3
♦ 10 8 7 6
♣ K 6

WEST
♠ 7 2
♥ A J 9 8 5
♦ A K Q J
♣ A 10 9

EAST
♠ 8 3
♥ 6 4
♦ Q 9 5 3
♣ Q J 5 4 3 2

SOUTH
♠ A K Q J 9
♥ Q 10 8 2
♦ A 4 2
♣ A 8 7

The bidding:
West North East South
1 ♥ Pass Pass Dbl
2 ♠ Pass Pass 2 ♠
Pass 4 ♠ Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

Only a person with a very stubborn streak would take a finesse which is almost certain to fail. You must search for greener pastures.

North made a well-judged leap to four spades on minimal values. Since partner's bidding promised a considerably better-than-minimum hand, North deemed that well-placed kings behind the opening bid and the ruffing value in clubs would

almost surely be worth enough tricks for game because of the four-card trump support.

The defense attacked with three rounds of diamonds, declarer ruffing the third. Obviously, the problem was to avoid losing two heart tricks. Since East did not take a heart preference, chances of finding the jack of hearts well placed were negligible.

Declarer found a way out of his dilemma. After drawing trumps in two rounds, South crossed to the king of clubs, ruffed dummy's last diamond, cashed the ace of clubs and ruffed a club in dummy. With the minor suits eliminated, declarer led a low heart from the table to the queen in his hand, and West was a dead duck.

The defender took the ace of hearts, but was faced with a choice of losing alternatives. If he happened to have a minor-suit card as an exit, declarer would ruff in one hand while discarding the losing heart from the other. That was not the case, so West had to lead a low heart away from the jack. But it was declarer, not partner, who held the ten. South allowed the heart to ride around to hand, and the game was in the bag.

Al Ali expects tough tennis tournament with Malaysians

By Serena Halasa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Hani Al Ali has been representing Jordan for the past five years in international tournaments. This Friday he will represent Jordan again in the Davis Cup tennis tournament at the Sports Palace.

Hani, who is a part of a four-man team playing Malaysia Friday said he believed in his teammates, but expressed reservation on the team preparation.

"I think our team is pretty good, but I don't think we have had enough exposure and practice," he said.

The Jordanian team has been preparing for this tournament since early January. Part of the training also included a two week trip to Sweden. Al Ali said he thought the trip was a positive one because it got the team in shape, but added "I think the drawback about it was that it was a short one, and not long enough to prepare us to play in the Davis Cup matches."

The Malaysian team includes two professional tennis players, that is why Al Ali expects the tournament to be very challenging. "I am hoping for a positive result though, I have a lot of faith in our team," he said.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Samaranch, Sabah due in Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch and Asian Olympic Committee president and member of the IOC board of directors Sheikh Fahd Al Ahmad Al Sabah are due to arrive in Amman on Feb. 14 accompanied by a five-member delegation representing the two Olympic committees. The Jordanian Olympic Committee (JOC) Secretary General Abdullah Abu Nuwar told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the visiting delegation will inspect the sports movement in the Kingdom and the activities of JOC. The delegation Abu Nuwar said, will discuss with Jordanian officials scopes of cooperation between Jordan and the two committees as well as the prospect of Jordan's participation in the Barcelona Olympics in 1992.

Kristiansen expecting a baby

OSLO (R) — Ingrid Kristiansen, the world's greatest woman distance runner, is expecting her second child in July but has no plans to retire from the sport. The 33-year-old Norwegian said on Tuesday she is expecting a baby on July 25 but expects to compete at next year's world championships. "I needed a break now and the timing of this pregnancy is just fine," said Kristiansen, the marathon, 5,000 and 10,000 metres world record holder who is currently in Colorado with her husband and six-year-old son Gaute. "I am aiming to be back in form for the world championships in Tokyo in September 1991," she said.

THE Daily Crossword by Martha J. De Witte

ACROSS

- 1 Associated abbr.
- 5 Weight
- 10 News
- 14 Sutherland
- 15 Poet's pal
- 16 Err
- 17 Quilt
- 18 Day's Day
- 20 Lure
- 21 Alibi
- 22 Navigation hazards
- 23 "How the wind" - raman? (Pound)
- 27 Outdoor party
- 30 Clapnet
- 32 Villain's look
- 33 Munch's river
- 34 Hints here
- 37 Musical acronym
- 38 Request
- 39 504
- 40 Warm room
- 41 Incolours
- 42 Basic abbr.
- 43 Devise
- 44 Gilt
- 45 Patched
- 46 Unwritten poetry
- 47 Run cake
- 48 Bore the teeth
- 49 Most difficult
- 50 Takes care of
- 51 Busy as —
- 52 Close down
- 53 Kind of animal
- 54 Caffe patron
- 55 BPOE word
- 56 Declares
- 57 So be it!
- 58 1 Prostitute
- 59 Large grotto
- 60 Persian Gulf land
- 61 Altruism
- 62 Bore
- 63 Party help
- 64 "I — Camera"
- 65 Dissembler
- 66 Lab gel
- 67 Tiffed
- 68 Where to find
- 69 Braid out
- 70 Fort part
- 71 Hurried
- 72 Hooley miller
- 73 Felena of song
- 74 Marks metaphors
- 75 Decrease
- 76 Site of the Krupp works
- 77 Quilt temporarily
- 78 Large grotto
- 79 Ham's medium
- 80 Persian Gulf land
- 81 NYSE people
- 82 Youth goddess
- 83 Citharon
- 84 Keyboard instrument
- 85 Dandelion
- 86 Aspect abbr.
- 87 Rabbit
- 88 Anian holiday
- 89 Gensels name
- 90 "I Amore"
- 91 Hamburg
- 92 Ripped
- 93 Frank
- 94 Actress
- 95 Hagen
- 96 Asian holiday

Yesterday's Puzzle Solvers

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Third drug offender identified at games

AUCKLAND, New Zealand (AP) — Australian Lisa Martin made marathon history Wednesday, but action on the eighth day of the Commonwealth Games was again overshadowed by revelations of drug taking by weightlifting competitors.

Martin's victory by 7 minutes 47 seconds over second-placed Canadian-born teammate Tami Ruckie was the biggest winning margin in women's international marathon history.

Martin destroyed the field of 15 runners, leading for every step of the 26 miles, 385 yards (42.175 km).

Her winning time of 2 hours, 25 minutes, 28 seconds broke the Commonwealth Games best of 2:26.07 she set when she won the title in Edinburgh in 1986 and was the second fastest time of her career.

Ruckie, 26, who only started serious running four years ago, was second in 2:33.15 and England's Angie Pain clocked 2:36.35 for third.

For the third straight day, however, competitors who lost medals were more newsworthy

than most who won them.

Organisers announced that a third athlete in as many days had failed a dope test, and said they would name him on Thursday after a second urine sample had been tested.

They also identified the two previous offenders as weightlifter Subrata Kumar Paul of India and Ricky Chaplin of Wales.

David Dixon, secretary of the Commonwealth Games Federation, said that Chaplin, who won a gold medal in the 75-kilogramme class, and Paul, who won two silvers and a bronze in the 67.5 category, both would have their medals rescinded and had been thrown out of the games.

Dixon told news conference that after hearing representations on behalf of Chaplin and Paul, "the two competitors have been eliminated from the games and their performances nullified."

He said Paul's tests had shown traces of the banned anabolic steroid, nortestosterone. Chaplin was found guilty on a technicality for having higher than normal testosterone levels, a naturally-occurring body-building hor-

none.

"The results of the relevant competitions and the award of medals will be adjusted to take account of the elimination of the two competitors," Dixon said.

He said the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) was being informed of the two cases "so that the appropriate action may be considered by that body."

Paul, the first athlete to fail a steroid test in the history of the games, has already been sent home and will have to hand over his two silver medals and one bronze in the 67.5 kilogramme division.

In the clean and jerk and combined, Lawrence Ignabomb of Nigeria will move up to the silver medal position, with Mark Roach of Wales taking the bronze. In the snatch, Australia's Mark Blair will receive the bronze.

Chaplin's gold medal in the 75-kilogramme snatch will now go to India's Kamadhar Mondal, who moves up from the silver medal position. Another Welshman, Karl Jones, gets the silver and Australia's Ron Laycock.

A spokesman for the Welsh team said the "team management had been informed of Chaplin's disqualification but would not be making any comment."

The spokesman, who declined to be identified, refused to say if Chaplin was still in the games village or had already been sent home.

"We are very saddened by the whole situation but the team remains in good spirits. There will be no further comment," the spokesman said.

Dr. Tamas Ajan, general secretary of the IWF, said he was shocked to hear of the positive tests.

He said the executive board of the IWF would meet in Melbourne, Australia, in March, to decide what action to take against Chaplin and Paul, and would consider whether any officials also should be punished.

All drug tests on athletes at these games are carried out at the Australian government's analytical laboratory in Sydney, and supervised by International Olympic Committee testing expert, Manfred Donike.

Tyson tapers off training; manager predicts short fight

TOKYO (AP) — Heavyweight title bouts in Tokyo tend to be short. Undisputed world boxing champion Mike Tyson ended the last one with a knockout in the second round against Tony Tubbs, and few expect him to go the full distance when he defends his crown against James "Buster" Douglas here on Feb. 11.

"We don't look for a knockout," Tyson trainer Aaron Sowell said Tuesday. "But if it comes, we'll take it."

The undefeated, 23-year-old champion has won 33 of his 37 bouts by knockout. He took only 93 seconds to flatten his last challenger, Carl "the Truth" Williams, last July in Atlantic City.

One official at the Korakuen Gym, where Tyson and Douglas are training, said ticket sales have been slow because "who wants to pay good money to see a fight that will be over a few minutes?"

But in preparations for the Douglas fight, Tyson's condition has been less than perfect.

Instead of a scheduled sparring session Tuesday, Tyson, Sowell and trainer Jay Bright circled the ring to loud rap music for more than an hour, trying to work out some problems with timing and balance that have bothered the champion since his arrival.

"When Mike doesn't do what we want him to, we take him out and drill him on the floor," said Sowell. "We want to work on a lot of things that he hasn't been doing well."

Sowell added, however, that they are tapering off the cham-

pion's workload because Tyson has been in training for about two months and "we don't want to overtrain him."

Tyson ended up on his back after running into a right hook by former world champion Greg Page in sparring last Tuesday. Trainers called it a slip, but Tyson's sparring the next day was shortened.

After a day off Wednesday, Tyson is to spar six rounds on Thursday.

Challenger Douglas, meanwhile, went six rounds with his three sparring partners Tuesday.

Manager John Johnson predicted Douglas will knock Tyson out in the early rounds.

"He's in the best shape he's ever been in," Johnson said. "Mike Tyson is not a concern, because James is just a better athlete. It won't go the distance."

Sanchez, ranked fifth in the world, and Paull, ranked 69th, traded service breaks in the first two games, but Paull was unable to win another game.

"I shot passing shots and backhands very well. I am in top shape as I skipped the Australian Open and trained hard," said Sanchez,

Sanchez, Maleeva advance into quarterfinals

PAN PACIFIC OPEN:

TOKYO (AP) — Second seed Arantxa Sanchez of Spain trounced Australian Jo-Anne Faull 6-1, 6-0 in 41 minutes Wednesday, advanced to the quarterfinals of the Pan Pacific Open tennis championship.

Also advancing was Switzerland's Mammela Maleeva, who crushed Terry Phelps of the United States 6-2, 6-1 on the artificial courts of the Waseda University memorial hall.

Top seed Steffi Graf of West Germany plays her first singles match on Thursday, meeting Nicole Pietrangeli of the Netherlands in the second round. Fourth seed Mary Joe Fernandez of the United States meets Japan's Nana Miyagi in the only other remaining second-round match.

Sanchez, ranked fifth in the world, and Paull, ranked 69th, traded service breaks in the first two games, but Paull was unable to win another game.

"I shot passing shots and backhands very well. I am in top shape as I skipped the Australian Open and trained hard," said Sanchez,

a clay court specialist, who added that she was comfortable on this tournament's artificial surface.

The third-seeded Maleeva, firing six aces, overwhelmed an erratic Phelps, ranked 55th in the world.

Maleeva, who has born in Bulgaria, became a citizen of Switzerland this month after her marriage.

In other second-round action, Larisa Savchenko of the Soviet Union struggled through two hours and 35 minutes and two tie breaks before outlasting Peanut Louie-Harper of the United States 4-6, 7-6 (13-11), 7-6 (7-4).

Sixth seed Gigi Fernandez of the United States beat Japan's Maya Kidowaki 6-3, 6-3.

In Friday's quarterfinals, Savchenko meets the winner of the Graf-Jagermans match and Gigi Fernandez plays Sanchez. Maleeva plays Brenda Shultz of the Netherlands, who beat Japan's Etsuko Inoue 6-1, 6-2 in the second round. The Miyagi-Mary Joe Fernandez winner faces Japan's Akiko Kijimuta.

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Performances: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30

Cinema **CONCORD** Tel: 677420
TWO MOON JUNCTION
Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema **PHILADELPHIA** Tel: 634144
Mahmoud Yassin... Su'ad Husni
In **WHERE'S MY BRAIN?**
(Arabic)
Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema **NIJOM** Tel: 675571
FRANTIC
Performances: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 Friday & Sunday extra show at 11:50 a.m.

Cinema **PLAZA** Tel: 674111
BEVERLY HILLS
Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

Sofia opposition rejects Communist coalition

SOFIA (R) — Bulgaria's opposition rejected Wednesday an offer by the ruling Communist Party to share power until elections in May.

"We don't accept the proposal for a coalition government," opposition spokesman Peter Beron said.

Communist Party leader Petar Mladenov invited opposition groups Tuesday to join a national unity coalition which would run the country until parliamentary elections in May.

But Beron said the party had not changed enough to allow real democratic discussion.

"The party has complete power as always and we can't change them," he told Reuters at the opposition's newly-opened headquarters in central Sofia.

"They have the National Assembly in their pocket and they can paralyse the government any time they want."

Beron, spokesman for the flourishing opposition umbrella group Union for Democratic Forces (UDF), added that the UDF felt such a coalition could damage its image at home and abroad.

"People would think that we are not serious, but just want to try to share power," he said.

Mladenov's offer to the opposition was the latest in a series of steps by the Communists to regain public confidence before the elections in the face of growing public dissent.

The party has already given up its guaranteed right to rule and has begun round-table talks with the UDF and other groups.

But UDF leaders say they are still sceptical of the party's sincerity to implement reforms.

Beron added that the UDF had dropped earlier demands to have only partial elections in May and postpone full polls until November.

"We don't think we'll be much better organised in the autumn," he said.

but offered no concrete prescriptions for Bulgaria's ailing economy.

He listed 14 senior officials associated with Zhivkov as having no place in the 870,000-member party. They face expulsion, and some may be prosecuted.

Two other close Zhivkov associates, his son-in-law Ivan Slavkov and former politburo member Milko Balev, already are under criminal investigation for misappropriation of funds.

Mladenov said the party must be de-Stalinised and renewed. But he offered few proposals to appease young urban intellectuals who want to see the party restructured along the lines of leftist government parties in Hungary and other liberalised Soviet Bloc countries.

He rejected the postponement of multi-party elections that could end more than four decades of Communist rule. The fledgling democratic opposition has sought to delay the voting until November to give it more time to organise.

As the congress met on opening day, strikes further eroded the authority of the government.

State television said a strike committee of teachers seeking better wages demanded the resignation of the leadership of the Education Ministry.

At the same time, a central strike committee of miners continued to negotiate with the government.

In an attempt to discourage more strikes and demonstrations, the Bulgarian militia, or police force, late Tuesday announced a nationwide campaign to track down troublemakers.

The announcement, carried by state television, said that in the future police would film demonstrators to identify "particularly malicious" people in the crowd.

The militia also said those persons would be tracked down with the help of the mass media and "local forces."

Gorbachev says resignation report groundless

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said Wednesday he had no intention of resigning as Communist Party chief and dismissed as "groundless" a U.S. television report that he was about to step down.

Journalists attending a photo session between Gorbachev and Brazilian President-elect Fernando Collor de Mello in the Kremlin said the Soviet leader looked taken aback when asked about a report by the Cable News Network (CNN) that he was considering quitting.

"I have no intention of doing so," he said. "No one has said this and I certainly didn't make any such statement. Any such suggestions are groundless."

The CNN report, which sent financial markets tumbling in New York, said Gorbachev had been despondent about the use of troops to quell ethnic unrest in the southern Transcaucasian region. At least 125 people have died in the region in the past 10 days.

The network's Moscow correspondent said Gorbachev had opposed the dispatch of the troops on Jan. 20 and had since

been in seclusion at his country home.

Gorbachev told the journalists he had been at his country home but preparing his speech to next week's critical plenary meeting of the party's Central Committee.

"In the next few days, we will have a very important plenum," he said. "Decisions will be required on very serious matters and they will be published."

The plenum, scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, is to discuss the turmoil in the Transcaucasian republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan and the recent split in Communist ranks in the Baltic republic of Lithuania.

It will also deal with the party's programme and statutes to be debated at a key party congress to take place in October. Gorbachev has made an overhaul of the party and its personnel at the congress a top priority of his reforms.

The Soviet leader is likely to face criticism at the meeting particularly from conservatives suspicious of radical change.

Senior officials said conservatives attacked Gorbachev fiercely at a plenum in early December and some reports suggested he had threatened to step down unless he was given full support.

In Washington, the United States said Tuesday that the resignation report was just a rumour and it would not change its view of the Soviet leader.

"All I can tell you now is that it's a rumour and therefore it's not something I think we should respond to or react to," Secretary of State James Baker told reporters.

"We will have a comment if we ever determine that it's anything more than just a rumour," he added.

Baker will delay by one day his February meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to avoid a conflict with a meeting of the Communist Party Central Committee, a Baker aide said.

The report shook up the New York stock market, which was marked by wild gyrations in share prices. Stocks ended

lower.

White House Chief of Staff John Sununu, who said he had discussed the report with President George Bush and National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, said officials were trying to assess the report's accuracy and the implications of such a move.

"It's not going to change the perception that we have of President Gorbachev," Sununu told reporters. "We would like to understand the details of what's involved and what's implied if such a change has taken place."

Defence Secretary Dick Cheney, who said last year he did not believe Gorbachev could succeed in reforming the Soviet political and economic system, suggested that any move by the Soviet leader to step down would not be welcome in Washington.

"I'm not sure that would be a positive development," he said. "I think there is a general assessment that Gorbachev's presence has been important in improving U.S.-Soviet relations."

C8LUMN

Editor wins \$1,600 in libel case

LONDON (AP) — Sunday Times editor Andrew Neil won £1,000 (\$1,600) in libel damages Tuesday from a newspaper that accused him of demeaning his position by dallying with a call girl. The jury awarded his employer, Times Newspapers, just 60 pence (\$1). But the defendant, the Sunday Telegraph, was ordered to pay the costs of the case, estimated at £200,000 (\$320,000). The high court jury decided that Neil, a 40-year-old bachelor, was libelled in a cartoon and two articles in the Sunday Telegraph last March. "It's a clear vindication. I'm delighted," said Neil afterward. "It's been a tough battle. I'm happy with the award." Peregrine Worsthorne, the former Sunday Telegraph editor who was named in the libel suit, said the damages "were so desirous that it was as good as a victory." "It was a case that should never have been brought and Mr. Neil should be ashamed of himself. Let this case teach all editors a lesson. Don't sue," Worsthorne, 66, told reporters. Worsthorne, in an editorial entitled "playboys as editors," claimed Neil's four-month affair with call girl Pamela Bordes rendered him unfit to edit a quality newspaper. Neil sued, calling Worsthorne's editorial the "most damaging attack on my professional integrity" in his six years as Sunday Times editor. He insisted that contrary to what Worsthorne wrote, he did not know Mr. Bordes was a call girl until after their affair ended.

No weddings on New York pier

NEW YORK (AP) — New Yorkers are used to being told what they can't do in public spaces: No parking. No dogs. No smoking. No spitting. No left turn. But no weddings? A sign on a pier along the East River, which borders Manhattan, shows a bride and groom inside the international symbol for prohibition — a circle with a slash through it. "It's a funny sign and we made it in a fun way," Department of Parks and Recreation spokesman Francis Resheske said. "We didn't mean to imply that weddings are prohibited, just that people are not allowed to close off the pier to the public." Resheske said many couples holding receptions at a nearby restaurant were led to believe they could hold private ceremonies on the pier. The pier has an unobstructed view of the Manhattan skyline and has become a popular pedestrian walkway — and a wedding hot spot. "We were getting complaints that it was being closed many Saturdays and Sundays in the summer," said Resheske. "We're not anti-weddings. If someone wanted to go out tomorrow with a judge and get married on the pier, fine. ... You just can't close it off. Violators can be fined up to \$5,000."

Sammy Davis Jr. hospitalised

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Song and dance man Sammy Davis Jr., who recently completed treatment for throat cancer, has been admitted to Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre for a gum infection, a spokesman said Tuesday. The 64-year-old entertainer contracted the infection after some dental work in which several teeth were removed, said hospital spokesman Ron Wise. He had dental work about a month ago and got an infection in a couple of his teeth, which were removed, Wise said. "He's being treated for a second small infection but he's doing well," Wise, who was contacted at home, could not say when Davis was admitted.

Global weather

(major world cities)

	TEMP.	WIND.	WIND DIR.	WIND SPEED	WIND DIR.	WIND SPEED
AMSTERDAM	07	45	11	52	Cloudy	
ATHENS	10	50	11	52	Cloudy	
BAHRAIN	10	50	11	52	Clear	
BANGKOK	22	72	11	52	Clear	
BEIJING	22	72	11	52	Clear	
BOMBAY	22	72	11	52	Clear	
CHICAGO	00	32	08	48	Cloudy	
COPENHAGEN	04	38	07	48	Cloudy	
DUBLIN	02	32	08	48	Cloudy	
GENOVA	01	34	07	48	Cloudy	
HONG KONG	18	64	11	52	Rain	
ISTANBUL	08	43	11	52	Cloudy	
LONDON	07	45	11	52	Cloudy	
LOS ANGELES	10	50	11	52	Cloudy	
MADRID	10	50	11	52	Cloudy	
MOSCOW	18	64	11	52	Cloudy	
MUSCAT	01	30	02	32	Cloudy	
NEW DELHI	10	50	11	52	Cloudy	
NEW YORK	08	47	08	48	Cloudy	
PARIS	08	47	08	48	Cloudy	
SAO PAULO	08	47	08	48	Cloudy	
SEATTLE	08	47	08	48	Cloudy	
TOKYO	08	47	08	48	Cloudy	
VIENNA	08	47	08	48	Cloudy	

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Polish primate in serious condition

WARSAW (R) — Poland's Roman Catholic primate, Cardinal Jozef Glemp, who has led the church through a decade of political turmoil, is in serious condition after two operations for a perforated ulcer, medical sources said Wednesday. Glemp, 60, underwent emergency surgery Tuesday after being taken to hospital with "massive internal bleeding," a priest at his residence said. The medical sources said he was very weak after another operation Tuesday night. He visited France last week. Glemp became the primate of Poland in 1981, a few months before the Communist authorities imposed martial law in an attempt to crush the Solidarity free trade union. During the 18 months of martial law, the Roman Catholic Church became a safe haven for the Polish opposition. The church, to which most Poles belong, also served as intermediary in talks between the Communists and Solidarity which led to the creation of a Solidarity-led government last September.

Quayle briefs Bush on Panama

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle, home from a tour of Latin America, is proclaiming a bright future for Panama even as some nations in the region refuse to recognise its U.S.-installed government. Jamaica underscored its refusal Monday on the last stop of Quayle's three-day three-nation trip. Quayle Tuesday briefed President George Bush on his visits to Honduras, Panama and Jamaica, and gave him "a number of ideas on pushing U.S. policy forward" in the region, said the vice president's press secretary, David Beckwith. Quayle said earlier he gave Bush a "very upbeat" report on his visit. Bush had sent Quayle to soothe the negative feelings aroused throughout the region when U.S. troops invaded Panama to oust former leader Gen. Manuel Noriega, now facing drug trial in the United States. Most of the Latin nations felt the invasion was a violation of Panama's sovereignty.

Bush backs torture convention

WASHINGTON (AP) — A foreign policy adviser to President George Bush has joined human rights activists in pushing for Senate ratification of a U.N. convention banning torture, but Sen. Jesse Helms expressed reservations about the measure. Abraham D. Sofaer, the U.S. State Department's legal adviser, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee the Bush government "places a high priority on early ratification of this important human rights treaty for substantive as well as symbolic reasons." While the convention "breaks little new ground" and would be unnecessary in the United States, Sofaer said it would put the United States in the forefront of the issue. Nevertheless, Sofaer said the United States would insist on some "protective measures" in the convention, which makes all acts of torture criminal offenses and requires parties to extradite those accused of torture. A two-thirds vote of the Senate is required for ratification, but the foreign relations committee must first vote on the issue. Helms, the panel's ranking Republican, said he wanted to hold more discussions with the president's office before a vote is scheduled. President Bush also is a Republican, but the opposition Democrats control the legislature.

Guam governor commits suicide

AGANA, Guam (AP) — Ricardo "Ricky" Bortallo, former governor of Guam, died Wednesday of self-inflicted gunshot wounds while draped in a Guam national flag and chained to a statue in a busy intersection. Bortallo, pronounced dead at naval hospital, was to have boarded a plane Wednesday night for Los Angeles. He had been scheduled to report Friday to the federal correctional facility in Boron, California, to begin serving a four-year prison term on witness tampering and obstruction charges. Bortallo died of massive brain damage, said a hospital spokesman. Doctors had worked furiously to save his life, but emergency surgery failed. Bortallo, 63, shot himself with a 38-caliber pistol after chaining himself to a statue of Chief Quipuha at one of the capital city's busiest intersections, said police Lt. Phil Dennis. He had unveiled four placards, one of which said, "I regret that I have only one life to give to my island," said Dennis. Also recovered at the scene were a bloodstained flag and a padlock and chain.

Serbian students seek end to Kosovo unrest

BELGRADE (R) — Thousands of Serbian students, raising the stakes over Yugoslavia's riot-torn Kosovo province, marched on parliament in Belgrade Wednesday to demand that the country's leaders end the week-long crisis or quit.

The students issued the ultimatum shortly past midnight after at least five more people were killed in clashes between ethnic Albanians and police in Kosovo Tuesday, taking the death toll in the riots past 20, according to Yugoslav media.

Yugoslav media say the southern province, where 1.7 million ethnic Albanians outnumber Serbs by nine to one, is sliding towards civil war.

Some 48 factories were on strike Wednesday in Kosovo where ethnic Albanians took to the streets last week demanding free elections, the resignation of local Serbian-controlled leaders and the release of political prisoners.

Now the crisis has spilled over for the first time to the federal capital Belgrade, where 7,000 Serbians chanting "we want weapons" and singing their national anthem hoisted a Serbian flag on a huge flagpole outside parliament.

"If the nationalist rampage of Albanian terrorists is not stopped, we demand the top organisations of the federation hand in their resignations within 48 hours," the students said in a statement read out to cheers and wild applause.

The students also sought permission from Yugoslavia's state presidency to form volunteer brigades to go to Kosovo to defend their fellow Serbs, *Tanjug* news agency said.

A similar protest in Belgrade during ethnic Albanian unrest last February mushroomed into a 500,000-strong demonstration to demand the declaration of a state of emergency in Kosovo and the arrest of Albanian leaders. Both demands were met.

The crisis has brought Serbia into conflict with Slovenia and Croatia, the most Westernised of Yugoslavia's republics, which have criticised Serbia's tough measures against the protesters.

Janez Drnovsek, head of the collective presidency, said Tuesday that the eight-man body would meet the presidents of the country's six republics and two provinces next week to discuss how to end the crisis.

Bonn hails Gorbachev unity stand

BONN (R) — Bonn hailed Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's support for German unity Wednesday and pledged to keep its present-day territory in the NATO alliance even after merging with East Germany.

Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher praised Gorbachev for recognising the popular demand in East Germany for unity and trying to create a stable framework to achieve it.

In his most positive statement yet on reunification, the Soviet leader declared Tuesday that German unity — which Moscow has steadfastly opposed since the end of World War II — was not in doubt but needed careful preparation on all sides.

His statement came as East German leaders, including his guest in Moscow Prime Minister Hans Modrow, began making their first statements for unity after 40 years of opposing it. "Once again, Gorbachev has proven himself to be a realistic politician who analyses developments in East Germany and the will of its people correctly," Genscher told West German radio.

"He wants to create a stable framework for this development — that must be our interest as well."

For the opposition Social Democrats (SPD), East European expert Egon Bahr called Gorbachev's words a breakthrough.

"There are no longer any differences between our and the Soviet general secretary's views," he said. "It is no longer a question of if, but when, how and what form a unified German state might take."

Gorbachev's statement also sent Frankfurt share prices up sharply Wednesday morning. "Anything positive on East Germany is good for the German stock market," one trader said.

Soviet support for the division of Germany, one of Moscow's proudest prizes from World War II, has long been a crucial hurdle to German reunification.

Before communism collapsed there late last year, East Germany was Moscow's most loyal ally and dependable economic partner. The Kremlin still has about 385,000 troops based there to man the disappearing frontline of the Warsaw Pact.

But a groundswell of pro-unity calls in both Germanys and the threat of political and economic chaos in East Germany has made the dream of a single fatherland almost unworkable.

Genscher and other politicians argued a neutralised Germany would be as destabilising for Europe as a collapsing East Germany and said West German territory must remain in NATO. "The option of a neutralised Germany is out," Michaela Geiger, foreign policy spokeswoman for Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats, said flatly.

"It's conceivable that no NATO troops would be stationed on the territory of present-day East Germany, maybe even that a limited contingent of Soviet troops could stay there for a certain transition period," she said.

Genscher said NATO and the Warsaw Pact would become more political in nature, focusing on verification of disarmament agreements, and dismissed calls by some right-wing politicians for East German territory to be integrated into NATO.

Ruling Romanian front to form party, offer role to opposition

BUCHAREST (R) — Romania's National Salvation Front (NSF) said Wednesday it would form a separate political party while continuing to rule as a provisional government.

And it said it would offer other political groupings a share of power — which it did not define — until next May's general election.

Parties revived since the overthrow and execution of Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu last month are angry that the NSF, which took power from him, is planning to contest the polls. They argue this will give it an unfair advantage.

Silviu Brucan, influential chairman of the front's Foreign Policy Commission, said a solution had to be found to its present role as both player and referee in Romanian politics.

"It is necessary that (the front) gain its own status, different from and independent of the state organs that have legislative power," he told Bucharest's biggest daily newspaper Romania Libera.

"For the moment, we will try

to divide off the state organs that have legislative power, in which the other parties can participate in one form or another, and which will function until the May 20 elections," Brucan said.

"We must find a generally acceptable solution in which the referee is not also a player," he said.

"I believe and hope that with the constructive cooperation of the other parties we will solve this problem satisfactorily."

Brucan said the NSF had never regarded itself as only a provisional leadership.

This feeling was put about by our opponents to prevent our participation in the elections," he said.

He said he had made clear in interviews with the Financial Times of London and Le Monde of Paris in late December that the NSF would fight the elections.

But Romanians said this intention had not been publicised inside the country until last week.

A front spokesman said a new round of talks with the other parties would start Thursday. The largest opposition group,

the National Party, said it would attend the talks.

A role in the interim government and free access to state-controlled media have been the parties' main demands.

The last round of talks with President Ion Iliescu was broken off after crowds of demonstrators for and against the front massed outside the building where they were taking place.

NSF supporters turned to intimidation Monday, besieging the offices of the country's two main opposition parties, forcing their leaders to flee.

In Washington, the State Department Tuesday accused the National Salvation Front of intimidating the opposition and said Department Human Rights Director Richard Schifter was in Bucharest "forcefully stating our concerns."

In other developments Tuesday, a military tribunal was told that Ceausescu's defence minister, Vasile Milea, was not shot of Ceausescu's orders, but killed himself rather than give orders to fire on anti-Ceausescu demonstrators.

Filipino tribes spurn autonomy plan

BAGUIO, Philippines (R) — Tribesmen in the northern Philippines have soundly rejected a government offer of limited self-rule for their gold-rich mountain region, voting results showed Wednesday.

Partial returns in Tuesday's autonomy referendum showed a big rejection of the autonomy plan in four of five provinces and in Baguio City, the regional centre, while "No" votes were also winning, by a closer margin, in the fifth province.

The region, rich in timber and gold, has been a battleground for a decade between government forces symbolising Manila's central authority and Communist guerrillas opposed to the presence of multinational companies in the area.

About a million tribesmen,

representing fiercely independent tribal groups, live in the area alongside a minority of Christian settlers who control much of the region's business.

Unidentified men exploded a home-made bomb outside the offices of the election commission late Tuesday night while poll officials were counting the results but no one was injured.

"Everybody scampered for safety. They're trying to scare us," said regional election commission chief Felimon Asperin, whose car was torched Monday, eve of the voting.

Police had no suspects but Asperin said he believed the incidents were perpetrated by groups which thought the commission was favouring autonomy.

The autonomy plan would

place the mountainous Cordillera region under a semi-autonomous government which would get a substantial share of taxes from big mining companies in the area as well as limited authority in regional economic planning.

But Manila would provide the main direction. A ragged coalition of conservative politicians, civic and business groups, Communist rebels and an armed faction led by former Roman Catholic Priest Conrado Balweg opposed the plan, saying it did not provide for real autonomy.

"People thought 90 per cent of the area will still be controlled by the central government, not the autonomous government," Benguet provincial board member Raul Molintas told reporters, explaining the massive "no" vote.

Savimbi returns from European tour after air offensive on UNITA

LISBON, Portugal (AP) — Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi cut short a planned visit to Western Europe Tuesday, saying the Angolan government had launched a major air offensive against strongholds of his UNITA guerrillas.

Savimbi told reporters that waves of Soviet-supplied MiG and Sukhoi planes began bombing UNITA territory in south east Angola Monday.

He said the air raids were the worst since civil war erupted in 1975 between his U.S.-backed rebels and the Marxist government, which took power when Angola gained independence from Portugal.

"It's the first time in 14 years that we've had these sweeping raids," said the rebel leader. Up to 14 planes were being used in single attacks, he added.

A government official contacted Tuesday by telephone in the Angolan capital of Luanda declined to confirm Savimbi's claim of intensive bombing raids.

However, the official, who asked not to be identified, said government forces were creating serious problems for the rebels, provoking the sudden abandonment of Savimbi's European tour.

Savimbi arrived Saturday in

Lisbon for an eight-day visit. After leaving Portugal he planned to visit other European countries including West Germany, Belgium and Switzerland.

Despite the apparent intensification of the fighting, the rebel leader hinted chances for relaunching stalled talks to end the war had been increased by his visit to Portugal.

"There are movements again to start negotiations, there are contacts in Africa," said Savimbi. He did not give details of possible peace moves in Africa, but said Portugal had agreed to help as a link between UNITA — the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola — and the Angolan government.

Savimbi said the air raids hit an area between the Kuzumbi River and the rebel base of Mavinga, some 1,100 kilometres south east of Luanda.

For the first time the Angolan Air Force used sophisticated Sukhoi-25 ground attack planes supplied by the Soviet Union last year, Savimbi said.

He said the area attacked was inhabited by about 11,000 civilians.

The rebels shot down two Soviet-built MiG planes and captured two pilots, Savimbi

claimed. The United States supplies the rebels with Stinger ground-to-air missiles among a reported \$50 million of military aid sent yearly from Washington to UNITA.

Savimbi insisted the rebels' strategic Mavinga base was not in danger of falling to government forces and stressed the rebels' base headquarters at Jamba was not affected by the bombing.

In Luanda, an Angolan military official claimed Mavinga was surrounded and could fall soon.

The state-run news media in the Ang